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Why Revise the Scriptures?

EUGENE A. NIDA

"But why should I get a new Bible, when the words of my Bible speak so sweetly to my heart?" an elderly lady said, as it was suggested to her that perhaps she would like to obtain one of the more modern translations. On the other hand, another person, who had recently purchased a modern-language translation of the New Testament, declared, "Why, in the few months since I've had this new version, I've read the Bible more than for ten years. Now, it makes sense."

These two responses are typical of the differences which have always existed between the old and the new—the continuing conflict between loyalty to the past and concern for the present and the future. It would be quite wrong to imagine that these diverse attitudes concerning different translations of the Bible came into being only after the recent publication of the Revised Standard Version. The accompanying publicity, both pro and con, no doubt threw the spotlight upon certain underlying tensions between "traditionalists" and "contemporaries" (if we may apply such names), but conflicts over new and old translations of the Scriptures in English preceded even the King James Version. In fact, the strong adherents to the Geneva Version, published approximately fifty years before the King James, first opposed the Bishops Bible, published some ten years after their Geneva Version, but when the King James Version appeared, they spared no words of bitter criticism in denouncing the scholars whom they contended had distorted the Word of God.

500 ENGLISH "TRANSLATIONS"

Between the time of the King James Version, published first in 1611, and the present time, those opposing new English translations and revisions have had plenty of opportunity to denounce the work of persons attempting to put the Scriptures in a more intelligible form, for since 1611 a total of more than 500 translations of the Scriptures have been published in English. These have consisted of twenty-seven full Bibles, over seventy-five New Testaments, more than 150 publications of less than a New Testament, but not printed as parts of commentaries, and the rest, often consisting of major portions of the Bible, printed as new translations to accompany expositions of the meaning of the Scriptures. Even during the last fifty years there has been an amazing increase in revisions of the Scriptures into English, so that scarcely a year passes without some new revision of the Bible or New Testament coming off the press.

This almost unbelievable interest among English-speaking people in new translations of the Scriptures (their interest is manifest by the fact that most of these translations have proven to be profitable publishing ventures), is, however, not an isolated phenomenon. There is scarcely a major language in the world in which Scripture revision is not now going on. These include not only such major European languages as German, French, Norwegian, Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Greek, Spanish, and Dutch, but almost all the important so-called "missionary languages" of the younger churches throughout the world, e.g. Chinese, Tagalog, Cebuano, Indonesian, Thai, Nepali, Tibetan, Bengali, Hindi, Marathi, Zulu, Swahili, Chiluba, Hausa, Bulu, and Cuzco Quechua. In fact, there are major revisions now going on in more than 90 languages in the world, and further translating in another 175 languages, with other translators at work to produce the Scriptures in at least 200 languages which have never had anything of the Word of God.

In the light of so many revisions being made throughout the world, one is inevitably led to ask two kinds of questions: (1) Do all of these revisions tend to meet with the same types of opposition from those who insist, whether rightly or wrongly, that the old is better? and (2) What are the reasons for so many revisions, especially at this time? Is this the result of liberal theology, especially in the mission field? Or is this possibly a genuine "return to the Bible"?

In reply to those who may question the widespread nature of opposition to revision, one can only say that in greater or lesser degree it has always been present. Even the King James Revisers had to deal with the same kinds of complaints, as their *Introduction to the*

Eugene A. Nida is Secretary of the Translations Department of the American Bible Society. He holds the Ph.D. degree, in linguistics, from University of Michigan, and is author of *Morphology, the Descriptive Analysis of Words,* as well as of *Learning a Foreign Language,* and *Customs and Cultures.*

Reader (unfortunately omitted from practically all modern editions) so ably testifies, for their work had already encountered strong opposition and they knew it would meet with ungrateful bitterness. Accordingly, they wrote in the Preface:

> Zeale to promote the common good whether it be by devising any thing our selves, or revising that which hath bene laboured by others, deserueth certainly much respect and esteeme, but yet findeth but cold intertainment in the world. . .
>
> For he that medleth with mens Religion in any part medleth with their custome . . . and though they finde no content in that which they have, yet they cannot abide to heare of altering. . .
>
> Many mens mouths have bene open a good while (and yet are not stopped) with speeches about the Translation so long in hand, or rather perusals of Translations made before: and aske what may be the reason, what the necessitie of the employment: Hath the Church bene deceived, say they, all this while? . . . Was their Translation good before? Why doe they now mend it? Was it not good? Why then was it obtruded to the people? . . .

It is quite understandable that those who have been led to a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ through a message communicated to them in a particular version should feel that such a translation was not only fully adequate for themselves but equally valid for everyone else. Moreover, those who by long habit or because of vested interests become attached to a particular form of the Scriptures are very unlikely to give up the old without a struggle. It should not be surprising, therefore, that revisions of the Bible have in general been condemned from the time of Wycliffe and Tyndale right down to the present.

REASONS FOR REVISION

Certainly there must be some important reasons for the fact that at present there are more revisions and new translations in process throughout the world than at any other time in the history of the Christian Church. One cannot, however, point to any one reason as being either the exclusive or the principal factor in any one revision. Persons who have felt led to undertake such tasks have usually been induced to do so by a number of reasons, including (1) the existence of more accurate textual evidence, (2) important new information as to the meanings of biblical terms, (3) significant improvements in the interpretation of passages, (4) the inevitable changes which occur constantly in any living language and (5) a re-emphasis upon the principle of intelligibility as the valid basis for legitimate translating.

BETTER TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

In John 1:18 the King James Version and all traditional translations read, "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father." However, some of the important manuscripts discovered during the past century have what was regarded by many as a strange reading, for instead of "only begotten Son" these manuscripts read "only begotten God"—such an unmistakable declaration of the deity of our Lord that certain persons insisted that this must have been a change introduced by some overzealous scribe. But in the recently published Bodmer II papyrus, which dates from the second century A.D., the reading of "only begotten God" is unmistakably confirmed. It would be impossible, of course, to declare unequivocally that "only begotten God" was the reading of the autograph of John's Gospel, but it is most important that this significant variant be incorporated into modern translations, whether in the text itself or in the margin, for a translation which fails to provide its readers with this important new light is robbing them of some of the most important evidence from the best manuscripts.

There are some instances in which textual differences seem only very slight, but may be highly meaningful. For example, in the traditional rendering of John 7:52 there has always been a problem for exegetes, for it would appear as though the Greek meant, "No prophet ever comes out of Galilee," which, of course, was not true of Jewish history. To help to remedy this situation Owen suggested some years ago that the text should be amended at this point and that a single article should be added, so that the passage would read, "The prophet (meaning, of course, the Messiah) will not come out of Galilee." Imagine the keen interest of scholars who in going through the Bodmer II papyrus discovered that in this earliest extant text of John the article, suggested by Owen, is present. Undoubtedly, this passage in John 7:52, instead of being a rather oblique reference to the Messiah, is a direct one, and completely in keeping with the obvious intent of the Gospel account.

In addition to these two minor details, coming from the most recently available textual evidence, there are of course numerous other instances in which better biblical manuscripts have immeasurably improved the sense of passages. For example, in I John 5:18 we are no longer constrained to believe that "he that is begotten of God keepeth himself" (speaking of the effort of the redeemed to keep themselves from sin). Because of the absence of a single letter in the better Greek manuscripts, this passage should be translated, "He who was begotten by God keeps him" (indicating clearly that it is Christ Himself who keeps those who trust in Him). Rather than being fearful of the results of textual research, we who place our confidence in the inspiration of the writers of the Scriptures, rather than in the inerrancy of scribes, can be not only intellectually thankful for such greater accuracy but spiritually blessed by the more meaningful message.

It might seem anachronistic to speak of new meanings for words of the Bible, when obviously these words only had meanings in a society of at least 2,000 years ago. Nevertheless, during the last century an immense amount of study and research has gone into the careful examination and evaluation of masses of information coming from the Bible lands. The most important sources of our information are to be found in the tens of thousands of papyri fragments and scrolls, including everything from grocery lists to funeral orations. These scraps of paper have contained many examples of the words also found in the Bible, and thus have provided clues to meanings which were unknown to early translators of the Scriptures into English. For example, the Greek adverb *ataktos* (and the related derived verb) translated in the King James Version as "disorderly" in 2 Thessalonians 3:6,7, and 11 really refers to people who "live in idleness." The meaning of idleness fits the context immeasurably better than "walking disorderly," for it is in this passage that Paul insists that if one does not work he should not eat. Furthermore, Paul calls attention to his own practice of working for a living with his own hands, as an example of one who was "not idle" (verse 7).

Another term which in the papyri suggests the possibility of a significant difference in meaning is the Greek word *hypostasis*, rendered as "substance" in most translations of Hebrews 11:1. This same word, however, has been found to be the term for a "title deed" to property. This passage, therefore, may have a meaning which is much more concrete than what has often been assumed. Accordingly, faith may simply be "the title deed of the things hoped for," for it is faith which makes future hope a present possession.

The careful study of words has resulted in removing several instances of apparent contradiction from the Scriptures. In Galations 6:5 the King James text says, "every man shall bear his own burden," but in the same chapter, verse 2, the text reads, "bear ye one another's burdens." Such renderings are understandably confusing to many people, but a close examination of the two different Greek terms employed in these verses soon clears up the difficulty. The word used in the second verse refers to excessively heavy burdens, and the word in verse 5 means one's legitimate load. Contemporary Biblical studies have clarified the meanings of hundreds of such passages of Scripture, and it is thus little wonder that people throughout the world are demanding that they have revisions which will reflect certain of these more accurate renderings of the Word of God.

MORE ACCURATE INTERPRETATIONS

All improvements in text and the meanings of individual words inevitably add up to more accurate interpretations. However, there is a class of changes which is somewhat distinct from these other two, for though the text remains the same and the meanings of the words are not significantly altered by lexical research, nevertheless, modern translations have profited by important exegetical suggestions. In John 1:9, for example, the traditional rendering of "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" implies a kind of automatic enlightenment of each person on being born. However, this is not really the import of this passage. The theme of this Gospel is the coming of the light into the world, not the coming of men. Accordingly, most modern translations have followed an alternative rendering, "the true Light, which enlightens every man, was coming into the world."

Similarly, in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11 the traditional interpretation has been "the just shall live by faith." This is, of course, quite a possible interpretation of the Greek expression, which is itself a literal rendering of the Hebrew original in Habakkuk. However, there is an equally valid rendering which is much more in keeping with the theme treated in Romans and Galatians, for in these two Epistles Paul was not dealing primarily with "living by faith" but with "being justified by faith." Hence, the interpretation of "those who through faith are just shall live" should certainly be recognized, whether in the text or in the margin.

There are, of course, some persons who object to marginal notes in the Bible, for they think that these tend to detract from the authority of the Word, thus depriving the message of its full force. Interestingly enough, the translators of the King James Version were faced with this same accusation, and in an effort to forestall such criticisms they said in their introduction:

> Some peradventure would have no variety of senses to be set in the margine, lest the authoritie of the Scriptures for deciding of controversies by that shew of uncertaintie, should somewhat be shaken. But we hold their judgment not to be so sound in this point . . . Therefore as Saint Augustine saith, that varietie of Translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures: so diversitie of signification and sense in the margine, where the text is not so cleare, must needs doe good, yea, is necessary, as we are persuaded.

It is unfortunate for the average reader of the Scriptures that in so many editions of the King James Version the hundreds of marginal notes introduced by the translators have been omitted (except for certain reference editions which include them in the reference column), for their continued printing would have done much to correct false ideas and attitudes about biblical revelation.

This does not mean that editions of the Bible should be filled with the differences of scholarly viewpoints, but complete honesty and integrity dictate

that those who are aware of such legitimate diversities in rendering should indicate to the reader when there are alternatives. Anything less than this is not only misleading, but a betrayal of our Protestant heritage, which looks to the Scriptures rather than to human tradition for its authority.

CHANGES IN LIVING LANGUAGES

Another important reason for continued revisions is that no living language stands still. It is in a state of constant change in every aspect, whether in the pronunciation of words (as reflected often in spellings), in grammatical forms, syntactic arrangements of words, or the meanings of terms. People of the seventeenth century had no difficulty understanding "prevent" in the sense of "go ahead of" (1 Thess. 4:15) or "let" (2 Thess. 2:7 and Romans 1:13) with the meaning of "hinder" (compare the legal phrase "without let or hindrance"). They rightly preferred "Holy Ghost" to "Holy Spirit," but during the intervening years since 1611 the words *ghost* and *spirit* have completely changed meanings, for now *ghost* is understood by us as an apparition, precisely what *spirit* meant in the time of King James. People of that day could reckon by cubits, rods, furlongs, and firkins, but we need some equivalent in feet, yards, miles, and gallons. For the sake of greater accuracy and intelligibility we must use different words, e.g. "morsel" instead of "sop" (John 13:30), "prune" instead of "purge" (John 15:2), "rooms" instead of "mansions" (John 14:2), and "Counselor" instead of "Comforter" (John 14:16), to mention only a few.

Rather than "changing the meaning" of the King James Version, as some have claimed, such modern words serve more to "restore the meaning." In many instances the fault is not with the traditional translations, but with the English language which has changed, but most people are relatively unaware of what has happened.

RE-EMPHASIS UPON INTELLIGIBILITY

The importance of communication in our contemporary world has made it fully evident that if a translation does not communicate the meaning of the original it is not really a translation, but a string of words. Accordingly, an idiom such as "children of the bride-chamber" (which can be grossly misinterpreted) has usually been changed in modern translations to "wedding guests," or more specifically "friends of the bridegroom." Similarly, the strange phrase "bowels of mercy" has been rendered more meaningfully as "tender compassion." However, in order to make for greater intelligibility modern translations have not only modified the forms of idioms, but have often simplified the complex structure of difficult sentences.

In John 1:14 the phrase "full of grace and truth" obviously refers to the Word, earlier in the verse, but when it is placed at the end of the verse, even though after a parenthesis, its meaning may be readily confused. Accordingly, a rearrangement of order is not only fully legitimate but helps to convey the meaning of the original, which in Greek is quite clear because of the grammatical forms, but which in English can be entirely misleading if the words are left in their Greek order. It is often necessary that long, involved sentences be broken up into shorter, more intelligible ones. Compare, for example, the traditional translations of Ephesians 1:3-14 (which is usually one long sentence, even as it is in Greek) with modern translations, which may use as many as half a dozen sentences, with considerable improvement in sense.

One must not imagine, however, that this striving for greater intelligibility is purely a contemporary development. The King James translators were for their day real pioneers in this field, and as a result they suffered from their critics. On the one hand, they shunned the newfangled ultramodern terms of the time proposed by the Puritans, and on the other, they rejected a host of traditional words used by the Roman Catholics and the strict conservatives. Their ultimate purpose was intelligibility, and in stating their intent, these translators wrote, "But we desire that the Scripture may speak like itself, as in the language of Canaan, that it may be understood even of the very vulgar." (By which, of course, they meant the common people.)

This basic principle employed by the King James revisers, namely, that the message in English should be as intelligible to the common man as the original was in its setting in "Canaan," cannot be improved upon. This means, however, that if one is to follow the same principle one must not hesitate to revise the Scriptures or to use such revisions.

Today, even as in the seventeenth century, there are those whose basic suspicion of learning and scholarship has prompted them to decry revisions of the Scriptures, whether of the King James Version in that day or of various modern revisions in our own. Moreover, there has been in some circles the impression that revisions are generally the outgrowth of scholarly perversity in trying to upset people's faith. Such charges have been made not only against various English revisions, but perhaps even somewhat more against revisions on the mission field. The truth of the matter is that most revisions are promoted primarily by a desire for evangelistic outreach, and this is especially true for the mission field. When a church is spiritually dead—content with its ritualistic practices and its liturgical forms—there is no life to encourage any revision. It is only when the church becomes aware of its need to communicate the Word of God with greater effective-

ness that there is an urge to revise or to translate afresh.

Perhaps, however, the strangest contradiction in certain phases of contemporary Bible translation and revision is that some of those who most loudly proclaim their belief in literal inerrancy cling most tenaciously to traditional translations which in many instances are not based on the best manuscripts, and which at times contain inaccurate interpretations. Apparently, for fear that to give in an inch to modern scholarship will result in complete capitulation, those who affirm so strongly their acceptance of the truth as "God-breathed" frequently have resisted attempts to introduce any changes into the traditional forms. However, rather than being fearful of what might come from research in matters of text and interpretation and hence reluctant to participate in or promote such endeavors, conservatives should be in the forefront of any such undertakings. We have everything to gain and nothing to lose (except perhaps a few pet sermons) by the discovery of the truth as revealed to us in the earliest manuscripts and through the most reliable interpretations. Because the Bodmer II papyrus agrees with the best ancient manuscripts in not containing John 5:4 (the story of the angel disturbing the water in the Pool of Bethesda) and John 7:53 to 8:11 (the story of the woman taken in adultery), we should not be disturbed. Such facts should not prejudice anyone against textual studies, especially when the Bodmer II papyrus does contain such an important reading as "only begotten God." However, our reactions to scholarship must not be dictated by whether or not present-day discoveries confirm or deny our own theological views. It is the "truth which shall make us free," and it is this truth which alone can free us from our past errors (regardless of how precious they may have seemed) and reveal to us God's Word and will. This new appreciation of truth, as expressed in the processes of revision and translation, is the only basis for a common rallying point for all those who love him who declared himself "the way, the truth, and the life." END

The Last Days of Babylon

DONALD J. WISEMAN

What we know about Babylonia is mostly derived from clay tablets. Tens of thousands of these cuneiform texts have been found in the last century and for some periods these tell us a great deal about the inhabitants of the lower Tigris and Euphrates river valleys, about their religion, customs and business affairs. But as yet comparatively few of these texts are historical in the more direct sense of the term.

By a curious coincidence a number of texts that are historical have come to light in recent months, all relating to a comparatively short period of some seventy years—from about 609 to 539 B.C. Between these dates, as it happens, lies the last period of Babylonian greatness. In 612 Nineveh, the ancient capital of Assyria, was taken by the Medes and Babylonians and the latter inherited the former Assyrian empire; Babylon now ruled all Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine and, for a brief while, perhaps part of Egypt itself; Jerusalem fell and the Jews were carried off to exile. At the end of these 70 years, in 539, Babylon fell in her turn. She was taken by the Persians under Cyrus.

Although many of these happenings are known from the Bible or from classical writers such as Josephus and Herodotus, we have had few contemporary Babylonian records. Take the Battle of Carchemish, early or in our period; it was at Carchemish that Babylon won Syria and Palestine from Egypt, and its sequel was the capture of Jerusalem nine years later. Until now great events such as these have been known only from the Old Testament and Josephus (who often derived his history from the Old Testament) and their dates and many details have been lacking. The history of Egypt at this time is almost a blank and the doings of even major Babylonian kings like Nebuchadnezzar have had to be reconstructed from a few building inscriptions supplemented by later classical allusions. Scarcely anything is known of the Medes, the northeastern neighbors of the Babylonians, as they pushed their frontier north and westwards to the Halys River. The clash between the two great powers in Asia Minor—the

Donald J. Wiseman, O.B.E., M.A., is head of the Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities of The British Museum. This article abridges a recent BBC broadcast talk given on "Nebuchadnezzar and The Last Days of Babylon."

Medes and Lydians—remains a history to be read only in Greek literature. It was of obvious importance that we should find contemporary documents to explain the relationship of the Babylonians with these peoples.

THE BABYLONIAN CHRONICLE

At last, in 1923, two clay tablets were found of the class commonly known as the Babylonian Chronicle. They described the combined Medo-Babylonian sack of Nineveh at the beginning of the period in 612; they described the Medo-Persian advance on Babylon in 539 at the end. But for the next 30 years no further texts of this kind turned up. Then last year I completed the translation of four small inscribed clay tablets found in the Babylonian Collection of the British Museum. They were among a lot of ordinary contract tablets, looked exactly like them, and had been there for over 50 years. It now turned out that they were part of the same unique, reliable and contemporary Babylonian Chronicle, written in Babylon itself. One text tells how Babylon struggled to free itself from the Assyrian yoke, inspired by the leadership of Nabopolassar who was later elected king. Then in 605, it says, the aged and sick Nabopolassar handed over the army to his eldest son and crown prince, the vigorous Nebuchadnezzar. The very same year Nebuchadnezzar won the battle of Carchemish and turned three years of defeat by the Egyptian forces into a glorious victory. He marched boldly up the Euphrates bank to the Egyptian stronghold; then, says the Chronicle:

> He crossed the river to go against the Egyptian army which lay in Carchemish. The armies fought with each other and the Egyptian army withdrew before him. He accomplished their defeat and beat them to non-existence. As for the rest of the Egyptian army which had escaped from the defeat so quickly that no weapon had reached them, the Babylonians overtook and defeated them in the district of Hamath so that not a single man escaped to his own country. At that time Nebuchadnezzar conquered the whole of Hatti-land.

THE BOOK OF KINGS

Hatti-land was the name for Syria and Palestine; the biblical Book of Kings puts these same events this way:

> Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up and Jehoiakim became his servant three years. And the king of Egypt came not any more out of his land; for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

The new Chronicle even gives the precise date of Nabopolassar's death, the 8th of Ab, that is the 16th August, 605 B.C. and the date, three weeks later, when Nebuchadnezzar ascended the throne in Babylon. It was the very day he entered the capital after his victory, having ridden in from Palestine. This confirms what we already know from another source: from Berossus, who was a priest of Bel in Babylon, in the third century B.C.; fragments of Berossus' history are incorporated in Josephus. Berossus tells how Nebuchadnezzar, hearing of his father's death, "set affairs in Palestine in order and committed the prisoners he had taken to some of his friends while he went in haste, having but few with him over the desert to Babylonia." It can be estimated now that the young crown prince made the arduous five-hundred-mile journey in about ten days. The chronicle goes on to give details of the Babylonian operations in Palestine during the first years of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. He now received the submission of all the kings of Syria and her neighbors, including Jehoiakim of Judah who was to be his vassal for the next three years. Ashkelon was sacked. Fragments of a letter, written on papyrus, show that the city urgently appealed for help from Egypt but in vain. I think that all these successful operations were part of a carefully conceived plan. Nebuchadnezzar must have realized that, like many of his predecessors, he would have to consolidate his hold over the many city-states of Syria and Palestine before carrying the war across the Sinai desert into Egypt itself. He knew too that this step would have to be taken quickly if he were to free his armies for the defense of their own homeland from any possible invasion from the opposite direction—from the east. For in the Persian hills the first moves to unite the tribes were already taking place. The Medo-Persian confederation was no sudden achievement. It is not surprising then to learn from the new Chronicle that four years later, in 601, Nebuchadnezzar marched right through Palestine and fought a fierce battle with Egypt. There had hitherto been no hint of this from Egyptian, Babylonian or biblical sources, nor was it known that Egypt was so strong a military power at this time.

DEFEAT FOR NEBUCHADNEZZAR

The communique giving the Babylonian version of this battle says rather vaguely that the Babylonian and Egyptian armies "clashed in open battle and inflicted heavy losses on each other"; it is obvious though that it was really a defeat for Nebuchadnezzar, for he had to spend the next 18 months re-equipping his army. This revival of Egyptian prestige may explain why Jehoiakim of Judah now ceased to pay tribute to his Babylonian overlord despite repeated warnings of the prophet Jeremiah. The inevitable punishment followed: three years later Nebuchadnezzar set out for Palestine, having previously safeguarded his line of march by punitive raids on the Arab tribes of Kedar and Hazor, south of Damascus. The siege and capture of Jerusalem, well known from the Bible, is graphically

reported in the Chronicle:

In the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, the month of Kislev, the king of Babylon mustered his army, marched to the Hatti-land and besieged the city of Judah. On the second day of the month Adar he captured the city and seized the king. He appointed there a king of his own choice, received its heavy tribute and sent it to Babylon.

AN EXTRA-BIBLICAL ACCOUNT

So for the first time we have an extra-biblical account of this historic event which began the period of the Jewish exile in Babylon. Jerusalem fell on the second of Adar, that is the 16th March 597 B.C., and so we now have a fixed point in both biblical and Babylonian history. Jehoiachin's captivity in Babylon, by the way, is also confirmed by ration tablets which were found at Babylon in 1917 but were not published until 1949. These tablets name the king, his family and some fellow-Judeans, and list the amounts of oil and barley issued to them by prison officials. The Jewish king chosen by Nebuchadnezzar to succeed him was Zedekiah, whose rebellion eleven years later was to result in the desolation of Judah, the destruction of Jerusalem and further large-scale deportations. But of this the new Chronicle tells us nothing; the text breaks off after describing the suppression of an army revolt in Babylon in Nebuchadnezzar's eleventh year—that is, in 595. Except for one interesting tablet the Chronicle is only resumed in 556 for the reign of Nabu-na'id, better known perhaps as the classical Nabonidus, the last native king of Babylon.

DISCOVERING A CLUE

While I was working on these small documents, another piece of the jigsaw puzzle was found to fit into the growing picture of this period. Last autumn Dr. Rice of the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London uncovered three unusually large paving stones in the floor of the Great Mosque of Harran in Southern Turkey, the city where once the patriarch Abraham had stayed before moving on from Ur to the promised land. These stone blocks proved to be inscribed in Babylonian and are now being read by Professor Gadd, to whom I owe much of the information concerning this most recent and important discovery.

The three Harran texts all tell of events in the reign of the same Nabonidus. One of the newly found inscriptions purports to be the autobiography of the Lady Adad-Guppi, the mother of Nabonidus. This remarkable old lady enumerates her pious deeds done at Harran to the gods Sin, Nergal, Nusku and Sadarnunna; it seems she gave great gifts to these gods in return for the benefits bestowed on her during her many years of service. She names the eight kings of Assyria and Babylonia in whose reigns she acted as the high-priestess of the moon-god at Harran.

The other two monuments found at Harran are a more direct continuation of the events I have described. They are duplicates. They show the king himself holding a distinctive notched staff and above him the emblems of the moon-god Sin and other deities. A third copy of the same stele, by the way, has long been in the British Museum but so mutilated that it could not be read. In contrast to his mother's account of her life Nabonidus describes his own affairs in an unconventional manner with an appearance, at least, of much candor and modesty.

I am Nabu-na'id who has not the distinction of being somebody, and kingship is not within me, but the gods and goddesses begged for me and the god Sin raised me to the kingship. In the depths of the night the moon-god caused me to behold a dream saying, "Rebuild Ehulhul, the temple of the god Sin, which is in the city Harran, immediately. All the lands are entrusted into thy hands."

This introduction was no doubt intended to explain several things—how Nabonidus reached the throne (he was an irregular successor, what the Assyrians earlier called "the son of a nobody"), and why he was so devoted to this remote and distant sanctuary. His fanatical obsession with Sin's temple and worship was perhaps inherited from his old mother; it certainly led to his concentrating all his resources there for the first two years of his reign.

From Nabu-na'id we now learn for the first time of an unexpected turn of events.

But the people, sons of Babylon, Borsippa, Nippur, Ur, Erech and Larsa, both priests and people of the chief cities of Babylonia sinned against his great god-head. They created disturbance, they acted evilly, they paid no heed to the command of the king of the gods, Sin. They forgot their duty, they talked rebellion, falsehood and disloyalty. Like dogs they devoured one another. Thus they caused plague and famine to be in the midst of them, and it diminished the people.

Nabonidus then did a strange thing, he says.

I went far away on the road to the towns of Tema, Dadanu, Padakku, Hibra, Iadihu, as far as Iatribu; for ten years I went about among these and entered not into my city of Babylon.

LIGHT ON NABONIDUS' EXILE

The exile of Nabonidus to Tema in Southern Arabia has long been an event as celebrated as obscure and here at last is new light on it. He left the administration to his son Belshazzar—the same Belshazzar whose fate we know from the Old Testament Book of Daniel.

During his ten-year voluntary exile Nabonidus seems to have occupied Tema by force and settled there, building himself a palace in the Babylonian style. His new kingdom, if such it was, lay in the

Arabian desert some 500 miles south of Babylon. It covered a wide area, for Dadanu is obviously the biblical Dedan named by the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel as the neighbor of Tema and as a center trading in cloth with Tyre.

Now the most controversial and enigmatic aspects of the exile of Nabonidus are his motives for it. The new text seems to imply that he left because plague and famine were rife in Babylonia; we do in fact possess numerous Babylonian contracts which allude to the famine itself and show how sharply the prices of staple commodities rose as a result. Yet one suspects that plague can scarcely be the main reason for so long an absence. Perhaps the Babylonians thought that the plague itself was due to the king's religious heresy. One feels that at any rate the priests at Babylon must have thought his exile to be a just retribution for substituting Sin, the moon-god, for their local Bel-Marduk, as head of the pantheon.

Now by a singular coincidence another account of the same event has come to light within the last few months. This is a fragment of an Aramaic scroll found at Qumran in Jordan, which forms part of the "Dead Sea Scrolls." This fragment probably dates from the first century B.C.; that makes it about four centuries later than the events recorded by Nabonidus himself. It tells how "Nabu-na'i," here called king of Assyria and Babylonia, was smitten with a severe disease by the Most High God. At length God sent him a message from one of the Jewish exiles in Babylonia. This man told the king that the protracted sickness was a divine punishment because he had transgressed by praying to gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, of wood, stone and clay. The king thereupon repented and was healed. Then, as a result of a dream, he returned to Babylon where he proceeded to establish the worship of the one true God. His reign ended in peace and prosperity. Obviously, to the monotheistic Jews the moon-god Sin could never replace Yahweh as the Most High God.

REMARKABLE AGREEMENT

There is a remarkable agreement between this Aramaic second century document and the Book of Daniel—so different in origin and inspiration. In Daniel you have an almost identical story told not about Nabu-na'id but about Nebuchadnezzar; how he was afflicted for seven years, repented and was restored to his kingdom. The similarities cannot be explained by mere literary borrowing, for, as we shall see, the story also reflects historical facts concerning the end of Nabonidus' exile. Incidentally, Herodotus himself refers to both Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus by one name—Labynetus.

If the reason for the king's exile was not primarily the desire to avoid the plague or ostracism on religious grounds, Professor Sidney Smith may be right in his view that by going to Tema, Nabonidus sought to restore the dwindling fortunes of his country; his plan would have been to gain control of the rich trade routes passing through Arabia to Egypt and to the north. We know that during his absence he kept contact with his capital by camel caravan. But even if this move was prompted by economic necessity it does look to me as if the main reason for Nabonidus' absence was personal pique toward opposition to his pet project at Harran, and, perhaps, to the religious innovations which accompanied it. For on the stele Nabonidus tells us that at the end of ten years he found his subjects in a better frame of mind, being now willing to do the gods' will.

> They rejoiced in abundance and the kings of Egypt, of the Medes and of the Arabs, who had been hostile, sent messengers to me to make an alliance involving peace and friendly relations. The gods made the peoples of Babylonia and Syria to be united with me in word and heart . . . they kept watch and fulfilled my commands in the remoteness of distant mountains and in the remote paths I travelled.

THE IDENTITY OF DARIUS

Nabonidus had won his own way, but not for long. "The king of the Medes" in the tenth year of Nabonidus' reign can be no other than Cyrus the Persian, for he had incorporated the province of Media in what became the greater realm of Persia. We know that at the end of our seventy-year period—in 539—Cyrus captured Babylon; both Nabonidus and Belshazzar died soon after the fall of the city and the Babylonian empire passed under the sway of the Achaemenid rulers. It now seems that in Babylonia Cyrus used the title "King of the Medes" in addition to the more usual "King of Persia, King of Babylonia, King of the lands." On the other hand, according to the Book of Daniel, the conqueror of Babylon was an elderly Median named Darius who succeeded Belshazzar. The biblical text, if you remember, says: "So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian." There is no place in Babylonian or Persian history for any such predecessor of Cyrus, and attempts to identify this "Darius" have been a source of controversy for years. In fact, the majority of scholars doubt his historicity. But this new text reopens the whole question. Is it too bold an hypothesis to suggest that the "King of the Medes" of our Babylonian text may yet prove to be the "Darius the Mede" of Daniel's day? Cyrus, at the age of 62, might well have taken another name as king of the Medes and even have been the son of an Ahasuerus, as was the biblical "Darius," so obscure is his ancestry. The biblical reference can as easily be translated "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, *even* in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Satisfactions of a Life in God's Word

WILBUR M. SMITH

When one has passed the age of sixty, aware that more than two-thirds of his life has gone by, and that probably not more than ten or twelve years remain for work at any task worth mentioning (and when, of these years, twoscore have been spent in one profession) he is compelled to ask himself two questions. If the answers do not satisfy him, the questions may torment him the remainder of his life.

The first is this: If I had my life to live over again, and had any choice in the matter, would I devote myself to the same work that has engaged my time and strength these forty years? And the second: How shall I most satisfyingly occupy myself in the years that remain, should God grant this further period of time? This question in turn poses a supplementary one: Is the work in which one has labored all these years (if I may now use the third person rather than the first) of such a character that life's greatest joys will be found in continuing in these same tasks; or is one convinced that he has more or less exhausted what his chosen field of labor offers, and that new joys will be found only in the exploration of some other area of knowledge or activity?

. . . . . .

The name of Wilbur M. Smith has been synonymous for a generation with the study of the English Bible. Born in Chicago on June 9, 1894, he ministered in Presbyterian pulpits in Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania before teaching at Moody Bible Institute (1938-47) and then at Fuller Theological Seminary, where he has served the last ten years as Professor of English Bible. He is Editor of *Peloubet's Select Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons,* and is currently featured in a Sunday night television series (Los Angeles, Channel 13) on the fulfillment of biblical prophecies. An indefatigible writer, he is author of over a dozen books.

Unless in this article I purpose to face such questions impersonally, and thus merely spin out a few pious platitudes, it is necessary to be somewhat autobiographical—a line I have not normally pursued in my writings. In the fall of 1918, I began my first pastorate, among the beloved, hospitable folk of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, at Ocean City, and there realized that the great passion of my life was the study, preaching and teaching of the Word of God. In all the years that have followed, there have been other secondary interests in life, but I believe there has never been a rival passion with me.

The gifts and inclinations which God gives one man in the Christian ministry are not, I am fully aware, necessarily those which he bestows upon another, but of this I am sure today: God has so ordered the duties and obligations of *my* life that it has not been necessary for me to forsake at any period of time this first love, the study and exposition of the Holy Scriptures. I have no administrative gifts, and it has never been necessary for me to spend two or three years, as pastor of a church, wrestling with the financial problems involved in the erection of an ecclesiastical structure, and arguing day and night with contractors, stone masons and plumbers—all of which I realize someone must do. I have no talents for playing musical instruments, for painting or for singing. I would be utterly bored in spending afternoons making imitation antique furniture, and friends who have asked me to play golf have never extended a second invitation after one afternoon on the links, for reasons that need not be mentioned. This does not mean that I do not enjoy music, or art, or a football game, but I have no gifts in these directions. Nor should this be interpreted as meaning that I live the life of a hermit, for no man could possibly enjoy more than I the rich fellowship of Christian friends.

THE TORMENT OF REGRET

It is now time to consider the two questions we have posed. All will readily admit that nothing could be sadder in the life of a Christian minister, apart from gross malfeasance, after having given the best years of his life to the ministry, than coming to the conclusion that he should have been engaged in some other major work during those years. It is then *too late.* Never will I forget that afternoon, twenty years ago, when I visited for the last time a beloved friend in Newcastle Presbytery, the most brilliantly educated minister on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, with a Ph.D degree from Harvard under Munsterberg and William James, a man of wholesome Christian character and a diligent scholar (though perhaps he had never preached to more than two hundred people at one time in his life). Pointing to a bookcase holding some of the major tomes

of philosophy he had once mastered—Hamilton, Berkeley, and others—and placing the other hand on the Bible, he said regretfully, in the rapid manner in which he always spoke, "Smith, I wish I had given less time to these philosophers and more time to this Book in which we read, 'Thus saith the Lord.'" My own personal conviction is that the man who spends his life, believingly, in the study and interpretation of the Word of God will never be tormented by such regrets as these.

INEXHAUSTIBLE THEMES

It is hard to conceive how anyone who makes the study and interpretation of the Scriptures the pre-eminent labor of his life could possibly be tempted to believe that some other area of study and work would bring deeper satisfaction. For the loftiest themes that can ever occupy the minds of men are set before us in the Word of God, with fullness and certainty, as in no other literature of the world. The student of the Scriptures is continually confronted with such vast subjects as the creation of the universe, the divine purpose of history, the origin, nature and destiny of man, Messianic prophecy, a divinely-given legislation for every major area of life, the Incarnation, character, work, teachings, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the organization and activity of the Church, the profound factors of salvation, the consummation of the age, and the meaning and certainty of eternal life. No one man, or even the whole Church, has exhausted such themes as these, and it is in understanding these subjects that the heart of man comes to rest and the mind is delivered from darkness, doubt, and despair.

The faithful student of the Scriptures will find increasingly true the words of Augustine, written to his son in A.D. 412, "Such is the depth of the Christian Scriptures that even if I were attempting to study them and nothing else from early boyhood to decrepit old age, with the utmost leisure, the most unwearied zeal, and talents greater than I have, I would still daily be making progress in discovering their treasures; not that there is so great difficulty in thumbing through them to know the things necessary to salvation, but when anyone has accepted these truths with the faith that is indispensable as the foundation of a life of piety and uprightness, so many things which are veiled under manifold shadows of mystery remain to be inquired into by those who are advancing in the study, and so great is the depth of wisdom not only in the words in which these have been expressed but also in the things themselves, that the experience of the oldest, the ablest, and the most zealous students of Scripture illustrates what Scripture itself has said. . . ."

The statement of David in "the Psalm of the Word of God," "I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great spoil" (119:162), can be echoed in the experience of anyone who faithfully labors in the Holy Scriptures. His is a life of constant exploration and discovery. He has the opportunity, by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, of discovering in the Scriptures not only those truths which many other Christian students have previously seen, from century to century, but things which perhaps no one else has noted. One would think, for example, that the subject of the birth of Christ, with all the hundreds of volumes that have been written around it, would have been exhausted long ago, but actually no one has as yet presented to the Christian Church a volume which completely covers all the various aspects of this epochal theme. The number of treatises on the subject of the Virgin Birth is ample, but there are scores of other topics embraced in this single event—witness Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels,* which includes 71 articles relating exclusively to the birth of Christ! Who would want to leave the study of the Word of God at any time of life, and give his prime strength to the exploration of any other themes, when such divine subjects are before him, inviting to years of exciting research and discovery?

SCOPE FOR INVESTIGATION

We have had a number of books on Christ's prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, and we are now witnessing the publication of considerable literature, long overdue, on our Lord's Olivet Discourse, but no volume known to me has attempted to examine *all* the prophecies of the Lord Jesus. A number of scholars have given us the results of their study of the influence of the Book of Genesis in the New Testament, but who has done something on the influence of Exodus and Deuteronomy in the New Testament, or of Genesis in the remaining books of the Old Testament?

There has never been a time in my own ministry when I have not had before me lists of subjects or passages in the Bible that I hope soon to investigate. What does Isaiah mean, e.g., when he says that God has "declared the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done" (46:10)? What is meant by "the deep things of God" in Daniel 2:22 and I Corinthians 2:10? I long for time, extended periods of time, in which to study carefully the deeper meanings of the oft-recurring phrase, "the Word"; to examine exhaustively the work of the Spirit in revealing "the things of Christ"; and to know thoroughly every aspect of the message of the Book of Revelation. Also, for some time I have wanted to give extended study to the doctrine of *good* in this divine volume. Here is a word that occurs more than 800 times from the second chapter of Genesis to the Third Epistle of John, many of the passages being of great doctrinal and ethical importance.

I do not have space in this autobiographical fragment to speak with fullness of one of the never-failing joy that comes to one who immerses himself in the oracles of God, namely, the privilege of living with the greatest society of authors that has ever gathered around one literary masterpiece, that glorious company of expounders of the Word of God, and theologians of the Church, from the days of the Apostles to this very hour. What wonderful works are those to which the study of the Scriptures so often leads us: the writings of Augustine and the Venerable Bede, Dante and Wycliffe, the monumental works of Luther, Knox and Calvin, the quickening pages of Hooker, the cleansing lines of Lancelot Andrewes, the inspiring poems of Milton, the unexhausted treasures of Richard Baxter and John Owen, the sermons of Flavel, Thomas Chalmers, South, Guthrie, Liddon, Parker and Alexander Whyte, the theological works of Jonathan Edwards, Tholuck, Robert Candlish, Charles Hodge and Robert Flint, not to mention the thousands of books that have been written on the life and work of Christ, and that vast library of the more important biblical commentaries. What field of study and research in this whole world can draw an earnest student away from the ever-fascinating, compelling, transforming pages of the Word of God?

THE BOOK AND OUR WORLD

One born near the beginning of this twentieth century—a century which has seen the advent of radio, television, the airplane, of atom and hydrogen bombs, the rise and fall of three evil dictatorships, the fanatical devotion of more than a third of the world's population to materialistic and atheistic communism—who has made the study of the Scriptures the major concern of his life, now finds himself in a period of more world-wide interest in the Word of God than has been known probably since the days of the Apostles. The recovery of interest in the whole field of biblical theology, the archaeological explorations in the Near East, the excitement created by the unexpected discoveries at Qumran, Jericho and Byblos, the phenomenal sale of the Revised Standard Version, the work of Wycliffe and other agencies in Bible translation—all have brought the Bible again to the front pages of our newspapers.

The establishment of Israel itself, and the effort to reintroduce the Levitical code as it pertains to land, food, the Sabbath, etc., has compelled the citizens of that state to re-examine the Word of God. Congresses are now being held frequently in cities in Palestine, attended by hundreds of scholars from all over the world. The fruitful evangelistic labors of Dr. Billy Graham, whose messages are so constantly interspersed with the phrase, "the Bible says," have caused multitudes to recognize anew the power and meaning of the Word of God. Courses in subjects directly related to English Bible are more numerous and assigned more importance in the curricula of theological seminaries these last few years than at any time in this century. Economists and statesmen have gone back to the final book of the New Testament to find the right word to describe this terrible hour in which we live—so frequently designated, particularly since Hiroshima, "this *apocalyptic* age." So manifold and vast are the areas of Biblical investigation today that even the most serious scholar finds it difficult to keep abreast of the important literature appearing year by year in his own circumscribed field of biblical knowledge.

CRUMBLING MODERN ALTARS

How *comparatively* inconsequential are the other so-called great classics of literature, even those of our modern age. When I was in college, in the realm of literature we worshiped at the shrines of four of the outstanding writers of the last half-century, and some of the professors almost trembled with excitement and adoration as they opened books by these men. There was the playwright Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), the greatest of modern German dramatists and poets, Gerhart Hauptmann (1862-1946), the French essayist and novelist, Romain Rolland (1866-1944), and the English poet, Alfred Noyes (1888—). What message for today has the man who in the second decade of this century dedicated his life to the study of any one of these writers? How many students in our universities today are gathered around their voluminous writings? How often do we hear lines quoted from their once-stirring pages? I still love the poetry of Alfred Noyes, but how irrelevant are his words today—"It is lilac time in London"—in view of the frightful bombings that London knew, and may know again (may God forbid)? What contribution did Goethe make to Germany when that nation came under the demon power of Adolf Hitler? The strength for German faithfulness to high principles came in those days from the inexhaustible wells of the Word of God. The man who comes from his study with that one Book in his hand, in his heart, and on his lips, has the only message that can bring comfort and hope and deliverance in this mid-twentieth-century hour. This alone fills his heart with joy, and he thanks God for that divine guidance that has permitted him to spend his days in searching the oracles of God.

SPIRIT OF EXPECTANCY

A look into the future must conclude this brief and inadequate testimony. It may seem almost fantastic, and I would not have believed it possible if someone had predicted this ten years ago, but the truth is that today I personally have a greater spirit of expectancy

regarding the tasks I want to undertake in Bible study in the years that remain than I have known in any preceding years.

It is in the habitual, lifelong study of the Word of Truth that we begin to enter into the experience of the Psalmist, an experience of which the world knows nothing, "In thy presence is fullness of joy" (Ps. 16:11). The Word Incarnate is revealed to us in the Word Written, and the more we know of this written Word, the richer and deeper is our knowledge of Christ; and the more we know of him, the more we love him; and the more we love him and keep his commandments, the more do we come into a revelation of his great love for us. Is not the persistent study of, and obedience to the Word of God the key to the words of our Lord recorded in John's Gospel (15:7-11): "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples. Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you: abide ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." END

The Bible and Science

T. C. HAMMOND

It is sometimes said, "The Bible was not given to teach us science." Most people would agree. Yet the very vagueness of the terms employed has led to two very doubtful inferences. Some students of what is now called the "Liberal School" interpret the phrase as though it meant that the realm of religion and the realm rather vaguely called science had no connection whatever. A prophet may be completely astray as to scientific and historical data, yet may give us very profound thoughts on God. Pressed to its logical conclusion that would enable us to regard the Bible at once as historically untrustworthy and scientifically inaccurate, yet as providing real insight into spiritual reality. The average man instinctively rejects this dichotomy. He holds strictly to the view that a book which is discredited in one aspect is discredited in all. The average Christian views with distrust this division. He remembers our Lord's appeal, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"

The second inference emerging as early as the days of Origen is that while the Bible employs accurately historic incidents and certain scientific facts of nature, it is intended that these should be interpreted allegorically as pointing to a deeper hidden spiritual meaning. Origen gravely misapplied the words, "The letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life," and has a multitude of followers who at their pleasure discount the historical and scientific in the interest of what they call the spiritual.

AN IMPORTANT REFLECTION

Without making either of these valiant efforts to cut the Gordian knot, the ordinary thoughtful person reflects that a great company of distinguished scientists have been humble believers in the Bible. He even goes further and reflects that modern science had its origin and development solely in Christian countries. The early scientists who studied nature argued that since God was one, the whole area of organized being would reflect a certain unity of purpose.

While, therefore, we admit that the Bible was not given to teach us science, we would seek some adequate explanation of the relation of revelation to ascertained scientific facts.

The word "science" itself is rather ambiguous. It conveys to the uninitiated the idea that there is one sphere of experience covered by the word. But it is only a general term used for convenience to cover very many diverse and sometimes apparently conflicting experiences.

In its wider application science may be defined as an accumulated mass of data resulting from a diligent

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T. C. Hammond was Principal of Moore Theological College in Sydney, Australia, from 1936-53, and continues his ministry as Rector of St. Philip's in that city. He holds the B.A. and M.A. degrees from Trinity College, Dublin, and the Th.D. degree from Australian College of Theology. He is author of *Authority in the Church, In Understanding Be Men, Perfect Freedom, New Creation,* and other apologetical works.

use of the principles of observation and reflection. If we accept that definition we may freely concede that the scientist and the theologian are alike subject to the distorting influences of error and prejudice. Either party may observe incorrectly, and either party may lean towards a conclusion as the result of preconceived notions. The true scientist is so well aware of this that he invites a friend to check his observations. The theologian is only too well aware of the many friendly critics that question his deductions.

We have defined science in its wider application as an accumulated mass of data. Indeed, in modern times the range of study in any particular subject has become so extensive that it is not possible to rest in a vague general term. The student can only study his special branch and endeavor to meet the difficulties that result from other branches of study where these infringe on his particular subject. In doing so he is, naturally, dependent on information received from experts or reputed experts in other lines of investigation. The possibility of misinterpretation is thereby increased, but it is the only method of treatment open to a patient investigator.

The popular idea in some quarters that the Bible has been exploded by science does not command the assent of scientists themselves. Haeckel, for example, pays a tribute to the cosmogony of Moses though he professes to find errors in it (*History of Creation,* Vol. I, p. 38) [See the reference in James Orr's *The Problem of the Old Testament,* and the reply there to Haeckel's exceptions.] We must distinguish between scientific speculation, valuable as it has often proved, and the facts established by science. Nor must we confuse the assertion that "the Bible was not given to teach us science" with the assertion that the Bible contradicts science. The Christian view is that all truth is one and all truth comes from God.

PHENOMENAL AND SCIENTIFIC LANGUAGE

In order to clarify our thought we must distinguish between what is called phenomenal language and what is called scientific language. The former describes things as they appear to the beholder. The latter makes an effort to indicate important relations that are not apparent. Carlyle gives an interesting illustration of the difference when he says *(Continued on page 24)*

Archaeology and the Bible

FRANCIS R. STEELE

Until about a century ago virtually all knowledge of the ancient Near East stemmed ultimately from the Bible. Nearly all history of Egyptian, Babylonian, Hittite and Persian empires and monarchs was derived either directly from biblical accounts or indirectly from ancient literature, which itself went back to early biblical records. It is difficult for us today to appreciate this significant fact, since we now enjoy possession of hundreds of thousands of original documents from these lands, some going back almost 3,000 years before Christ. In addition, the major museums of the world contain fabulous collections of utilitarian and artistic objects, fashioned by people living in this region, which cover an even longer period of time.

Lands and people once known to us only from biblical references and, strangely enough, sometimes considered mythical or fictional for that reason only, are now known in greater detail upon the basis of the very artifacts those people made and the documents they inscribed. All this has resulted from the archaeological researches in ancient Bible lands, first carried out in a scientific manner as distinguished from earlier treasure hunts or reports of curious but unskilled travelers—in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, it is now possible to reconstruct in remarkable detail the ritual worship of Egyptian priests, the curriculum of Sumerian schoolboys, and the court life of Assyrian kings who lived and died ages ago. In truth, much of the world of Abraham, Moses, David and Daniel has come alive again through the diligent skills of the excavator's spade and the scholar's pen.

Perhaps the most important question to which these discoveries have given rise is their bearing upon the

Francis Rue Steele was Assistant Professor of Assyriology at University of Pennsylvania from 1947-53, and also Assistant Curator of the Babylonian Section of the University Museum. Since then he has led the North Africa Mission as Home Secretary. Twice he has been annual professor of the Bagdad School of the American Schools of Oriental Research. He holds the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from University of Pennsylvania.

historical records of the Bible. In general, there are two opposite opinions. Some hold that although many historical statements in the Bible agree with the facts determined by archaeological studies, in at least as many instances the new findings point up errors in the Bible, especially in the earlier periods and the prophetic books. Others believe that there is perfect and complete agreement between the two sources of data. In fact, however, both positions are incorrect. The fundamental error of the first is its assumption of equal or superior validity and consequent authority for the partial data of science over the records of the Bible. The fallacy of the second is its assumption that human interpretation of observed data in archaeological science is as reliable as divine revelation concerning historic events recorded in the Bible. Such false assumptions have inevitably led both opponents and proponents of the Bible to make improper use of archaeological data in relation to the biblical text.

BEARING ON THE BIBLE

This tendency manifests itself characteristically in the use of the word "prove" when describing the function of archaeology with relationship to the Bible. It has led, for example, to such statements as "recent excavations at Jericho have shown that this city did not exist as a significant settlement at the time of Joshua, thereby proving that the biblical tradition of Joshua chapter six is false," or, on the other hand, "flood deposits at Ur prove that the biblical flood actually occurred." As a matter of fact, neither the chronological data regarding Jericho nor the interpretation of "flood" evidence at Ur are so certain that they can be cited as superior to and hence either corrective to or confirmatory of the Bible.

To illustrate: let us suppose that the citizens of a small town begin to question whether they are getting full measure when they purchase in the local shops. They feel they are getting less than the yards of goods they pay for. Having been informed that all standards in use in the town must conform with the national standard in Washington, D. C., the skeptical citizens decide to check the national standard for accuracy. In order to do so, one citizen acquires a cloth tape measure, another a steel measuring tape, and yet another a wooden yardstick. And they all entrain for Washington. Upon arrival they proceed to the Bureau of Standards and request the opportunity to apply their several manifestly approximate measures to the platinum meter bar, which is the accepted national standard of accurate measurement, in an attempt to discover whether or not their measures are, in fact, long enough. Such insane behavior would certainly have been detected at an early stage and the travelers would have been hurried off to confinement, reserved for persons of known mental aberration. Yet, this identical procedure is followed by multitudes of respected scientists and misguided Christians who are apparently unaware that it is folly to apply final criticism of the Scriptures by use of the, at the very best, relative criteria of scientific truth.

VALUE AND FUNCTION

What then is the value and function of archaeological materials as related to the Bible? There are two areas where this rich body of data, so recently discovered and still accumulating, is very useful. It provides the Christian with abundant material to fill in the background of biblical history, thus giving better perspective. It also helps to correct many mistaken concepts regarding biblical history, which have raised honest questions in the minds of persons seeking to understand the Bible.

In the first place, we must recognize that although the Bible gives a true picture of the history it records, it does not necessarily convey a balanced picture of ancient Near East history, and for very good reasons. The purpose of the Bible is not to record ancient history but rather the history of God's redemptive plan for fallen man. Therefore, it treats general history selectively, incorporating only those events bearing on God's special dealing with men for salvation. As a result, the most important periods of Egyptian and early Babylonian history receive no mention whatever while relatively minor rulers in Egypt and Syria are often featured prominently. Had we no other material at hand than that which the Bible affords, our picture of general history in the ancient Near East would be seriously distorted and out of proportion. Archaeological data, on the other hand, allow us to appreciate the development of biblical history against the total background.

For example, we now recognize that the dynasty of David and Solomon witnessed the only significant local empire in recorded Palestinian history, and this fact throws light on the biblical ascription of glory to the reign of Solomon. Furthermore, we now appreciate the political climate in which this empire flourished when archaeology shows that the major powers surrounding Palestine at that time were in marked decline either through internal upheaval or general disintegration. In short, we see how God prepared the times for his people.

In later periods archaeological records help us to visualize the power of the Assyrian empire and the might of its vast armies campaigning far and wide. Official records and reliefs from the royal palaces make it easy to sympathize with Hezekiah as he trembled at the thunderous approach of the invading host. They also highlight the power of God to deliver his embat-

tled people when they placed their firm trust in him.

These same materials can be used to destroy the common misconception that the Bible is at worst simply religious myth and at best chauvinistic, unreliable local history, by demonstrating the numerous remarkable and detailed parallels between biblical history and the contemporaneous secular records of the same events. But it must be pointed out and strongly emphasized that approval or agreement of the secular documents can only lift the biblical records to their own level—that of relatively accurate accounts of current events made by fallible men—and by no means establish the complete reliability of the biblical text. There are sufficient evidences of error and bias in archaeological records to show their limitations in this respect. But even within these limitations much helpful material abounds and is a welcome corrective to the irresponsible extreme criticisms of earlier days, which, strangely enough, still live on in the popular mind long after their refutation by solid facts.

SPIRITUAL GREATNESS

But the multitude of data collected by a century's research into the past history of the ancient Near East also emphasizes the sharp contrast between the people of Israel and their neighbors. Always and in almost every form decidedly inferior to the surrounding pagan nations around in technical skills and material culture, Israel nonetheless possessed an ethical religion far above them all. Egyptian papyri, for example, witness to a highly developed science of both medicine and surgery long before Israel's national history began, and one which continued long after the southern kingdom had ceased to exist. Moreover, temples and sculpture of Egypt demonstrate architectural and artistic skill and feeling far beyond anything ever produced in Palestine. It is noteworthy that almost without exception when skilled craftsmen were needed for public works in Israel and Judah, the biblical text points out that they were imported from outside. Nevertheless, the host of confused and often conflicting gods of Egyptian religious texts and the worship of them bespeak concepts of deity far below the material achievements of the same people, and woefully inferior to the theology of the Hebrew Scriptures, whose concept of "ethical monotheism" is acknowledged by all scholars as unique in the ancient world.

Likewise, we marvel at the advanced stage that Babylonian mathematical science had reached well before the time of Moses, as hundreds of clay tablets indicate familiarity with many principles long thought to have been Greek contributions to science. In addition, we find such technical skills as metallurgy, sculpture in various materials, and gem cutting developed in Mesopotamia even before the days of recorded history, to a degree never approached by the people of Israel. Once again, however, as in Egypt, the picture of squabbling, scheming gods seen in the Babylonian documents evidences a religious morality quite opposite to that of the Bible.

MORALITY AND TECHNICAL SKILL

The truth established by these sharp contrasts is a highly significant one, cutting across the basic assumption in the interpretation of anthropology. The marked disparity between cultural and psychical achievements in Egypt, Babylonia and Israel should teach us not to assume any necessary link between the two in the course of human history. Yet an axiom of anthropological science is the assumption that psychical development in man will follow closely his improvement of technical skills. Ancient man with simple tools, we are told, have naive ideas concerning religion. As his tools became more complicated, his theology became more sophisticated. The basic premise for such reasoning is the broad concept of organic evolution implicitly held by the majority of present-day scientists. Therefore the line of argument is understandable, but not acceptable. The Bible tells us of a man whose level of culture development was absolutely minimal. He would be described in scientific terms of today as a simple agriculturist with, so far as we can determine, a primitive tool industry, no knowledge of fire, and actually no domestication of selected animals (all were obedient to him). Yet this man had intimate personal converse with God in a way not possible for anyone today. Can any contrast be greater than that?

This account of Adam is often rejected today. But the principle that no necessary correlation exists between technology and theology has been demonstrated over and over again.

We might even cite here examples of the exact opposite to Adam, namely, cases of extremely advanced technical skill and yet incredibly retrogressive religion and morality. During World War II scientists from a nation in the forefront of technology committed barbaric atrocities unknown in the civilized world for centuries, while the nation itself, once a cradle of Protestant Christianity, officially reintroduced the worship of long forgotten pagan deities. The biblical pattern of human development agrees with history, even if both contradict the theories of anthropology.

Both opponents and proponents of the Bible err when they reverse the order of authority, which distinguishes the data discovered by scientific investigation and facts received by divine revelation. Whether their purpose is to attack or to defend the historicity of the Bible makes no difference. Neither archaeology nor any other science affords evidence of a character equal to the task. END

A LAYMAN *and his Faith*

CHRISTIANS AND GENTLEMEN

A LITTLE GIRL is said to have offered this prayer: "Dear God, make more people Christians and more Christians nice."

Whether this anecdote is apocryphal or not, the underlying thought should concern all Christians. Only too often we Christians seem to overlook the niceties of human relations at the personal level. In so doing we are of little credit to the faith we profess.

The present usage of the word "gentleman" carries the connotation of one who is kind, gentle, considerate and thoughtful of the feelings and sensibilities of others. Unfortunately, the words "Christian" and "gentleman" cannot always be used synonymously.

A Christian should be one who exercises control of temper, speech and action. Yet some lose their tempers and even make an unfortunate exhibition of themselves in public places. Furthermore, Christians are often regrettably guilty of harshness of speech in speaking of others, including fellow Christians. And, Christians often act in such a manner that the worldling would never guess that they are other than pagans with more or less of a cultural veneer.

It is obvious that many, who, by the standards of this world are gentlemen, are in no sense Christians. It is equally true that some Christians can hardly be classed as gentlemen.

¶ One of the things this world needs is people who combine both—people with the spiritual insights and morals of a Christian and the manners of a gentleman.

Why should we who profess the name of Christ, the One "altogether lovely," disgrace that Name by failing to meet the standard such an allegiance demands?

The answer is we fail to make Christ the Lord of our lives. Furthermore, we fail to appropriate to ourselves the Christian graces and to show the fruit of the indwelling Spirit when with others.

This is a matter of grave concern. The witness for Christ in a needy world is so often lost because of the behavior of the very people to whom men should look. That this is a scandal no one should deny. That it can be changed we all should admit. That some of us do not stop to recognize our own share in this unhappy situation is the occasion for writing this article. Let us consider:

¶ A Christian gentleman will be *slow to lose patience,* despite the fact that people may be very trying. This ability to be patient is a Christian grace which will carry us over some very difficult experiences and enable us to rise above them to the satisfaction of our own souls and also to the glory of God.

A Christian gentleman will *look for a way to be constructive* when provoked to be the very opposite. How easy to quench the smouldering flax or destroy the bruised reed, but how very worthwhile to conserve and strengthen that glimmer of good we can find in others if we but look for it.

A Christian gentleman will *not envy the good fortune of others,* nor will he belittle the achievements and recognitions others may receive, even when he feels that they might have been more fittingly bestowed upon himself.

A Christian gentleman will *refrain from trying to impress others* with his own importance. The worthy qualities of character and his achievements in life will eventually become known. To boast of them or to try to make them obvious is but to tarnish their original beauty. Nothing so detracts from a man as conceit and, because God hates pride, it can prove our complete undoing.

A Christian gentleman will have *good manners.* One does not have to be born in a palace to observe the amenities of life. Some of the most courteous people we have ever known were those to whom had been denied many of the social advantages possessed by others. But the courtesy, sense of propriety, and the demeanor they exhibited to others showed beyond a doubt that true culture is a matter of the heart and not of social standing.

A Christian gentleman will *refrain from being "touchy,"* even when he feels strongly that he has a right to resent the attitude of others. Many a Christian testimony has been lost by those who are easily provoked. Self restraint is needed, also a willingness to take an injustice on the chin if in so doing we can honor Christ.

A Christian gentleman will *think the best, not the worst of others,* and he will look for good and not for the evil. He will try to be as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove in handling others.

A Christian gentleman will *not gloat over the wickedness of other people.* In the theological realm he will rejoice whenever the Truth is preached, regardless of where or by whom, and he will not rush to expose every error he may discover but will try to cover it with the Truth itself.

A Christian gentleman will exhibit, above all else, *the love of Christ in his heart and life,* exercising by God's help the graces necessary to show that this love is practical and unselfish.

If in the foregoing paragraphs there has been a paraphrasing of parts of the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians (with the help of Phillips), we make no apology for having done so.

¶ A Christian and a gentleman must do two things: take the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and make him the Lord of life and appropriate to daily use the fruit of his indwelling Spirit.

We have seen many exhibitions of temper, of lovelessness, of harshness, of ill advised language, of just plain bad manners on the part of people who are unquestionably Christians. We shudder to think of the loss of Christian witness which is involved. The obvious reason is that too many of us remain babes in Christ, never growing to be mature Christians and by that failure miss great blessings for ourselves while we dishonor the name "Christian."

This side of eternity none of us can be perfect. We are still in the flesh and we know only part of the picture, seeing even that as a baffling reflection. But this is no excuse for behaving as children, nor is it an excuse for failing to live by the grace and strength of the living Christ who wills that we should honor Him in every avenue and contact of life.

This is a matter of grave importance because it touches on a weakness of so many of us. A little courtesy, tact, good judgment, restraint, loving consideration of the feelings of others; all of these things can go so far to commend the faith we profess. Nor are we speaking of a kind of "satanic sweetness" which is nothing but sugar-coated pride.

The world needs more Christian gentlemen (and gentlewomen) who, for the glory of the Lord who has redeemed them, will let their lights shine before men.

With spiritual understanding and high morals? Yes. And in addition, with what the world will recognize as good manners in all of our personal contacts with others.

L. NELSON BELL

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DOCTRINAL CONSENSUS AND CONFLICT

At its United States Faith and Order Conference in Oberlin, the World Council of Churches drew up a series of section reports which it referred to member churches for study. The issues debated in ecumenical circles today are issues that involve the churches at large. While ecumenical conferences need not supply the orbit around which biblical and doctrinal study revolves, it is heartening to see such concerns raised with new earnestness. The neglect of biblical and theological studies by any church or association of churches quickly results in ambiguity and misunderstanding. Evangelicals within the ecumenical movement have a special obligation to scrutinize the faith and order reports, and evangelicals outside the movement will also do well to familiarize themselves with the precise positions adopted and rejected, and to engage in earnest theological study on their own account.

Of the twelve sections into which the Oberlin conference subdivided, that on "Doctrinal Consensus and Conflict" was in some respects the most significant. The reports of all the sections will be published in January by Bethany Press under the title *The Nature of the Unity We Seek*. By special permission, CHRISTIANITY TODAY in this issue carries the report of the section dealing with doctrinal issues. For evangelical Christians, the center of interest is here. They are eager to discover in what sense the ecumenical movement understands its confession that Jesus Christ is God and Saviour.

The report on "Doctrinal Consensus and Conflict" singles out three special areas "in which further agreement needs to be reached before we can move toward closer oneness." They are: the nature of the Church, its ministry and its sacrament; the nature of the authority and inspiration of the Bible; the nature of the unity we seek. Evangelicals will appreciate the realistic view that honest, intellectual agreement in these areas must precede any unity in which there can be mutual confidence. An unrealistic view would assume that genuine and essential unity exists apart from such questions, and that their solution may be deferred pending closer fellowship.

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As the evangelical Christian scans the Oberlin report on doctrine for special study, he will be inclined to press certain questions for special examination. Among them are these:

a) Is it proper to speak of "a common faith" and of "a common witness" in the absence of common doctrinal beliefs? Does not the extent of doctrinal unity define the extent of common faith and witness? Is genuine faith really devoid of intellectual content?

b) What view of Atonement is implied by "the sacrificial Saviour of the world in whom God bore the sins of mankind. . . ."? Does "sacrificial Saviour" mean the sacrifice of the Saviour on the cross, i.e., the propitiation, or is this phrase intended to deny such a sacrifice?

c) What view of the person and natures of Christ is implied by "the Incarnate Word of God . . . the divine-human Lord and Saviour"?

d) Why are some members of the ecumenical movement dissatisfied with the formula that Jesus Christ is "God and Saviour"? What are the several meanings these words can be made to bear? Are all interpretations of this formula equally valid?

e) Is it an illustration of destructive conflict springing from sin when churches remain outside the ecumenical orbit because they require satisfactory answers to such questions (as religious knowledge and the nature of the human and the divine in Jesus Christ)?

f) What bearing on the Protestant principle of authority has the emphasis on "the centrality of the biblical revelation in Christian doctrine . . . both as the record of the mighty acts of God . . . and also as the source of intelligible truths expressed in inspired words, whereby the message of our redemption can be spelled out"? How also is the Protestant principle of authority affected by "the witness of Holy Scripture, confirmed and interpreted by the witness of the Holy Spirit in the Church, as the *sine qua non* of authentic Christian doctrine"? Does this or does it not halt short of the historic evangelical emphasis on divinely *revealed truths* constitutive of *authoritative* Christian doctrine? Does it not seem that "revelation as witnessed in Scripture and received in the Church through the Spirit," and that "the authority of the Faith . . . is located in the Scriptures, the historic tradition of the Church, and the continuing work of the Spirit" differ from the traditional view of Scripture revelation? Does it mean that the supreme norm for judging all controversies of religion can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures; or does it mean that there is a living voice in the church organization and that some contemporary majority vote is the voice of God?

g) Does "diversity of doctrine" really reflect "the riches of God's grace and the diversity of his gifts to the Church" or does it reflect the limitations, the finitude, and the sinful nature of the human mind? Is there "Christian liberty and responsibility" to "interpret Christian truth in varied ways. . . ."? Is the idea of authoritative doctrine to be excluded? Does not Christian unity ideally seek an unchanging system of doctrine?

Such questions could be multiplied at length. But these at least will indicate some significant points of contact for the evangelical effort to appraise present ecumenical thought in the realm of doctrinal considerations. As a service to readers of CHRISTIANITY TODAY, the Oberlin report is printed below.

REPORT OF SECTION 2 DOCTRINAL CONSENSUS AND CONFLICT

I. Introduction

In reporting the results of its discussions on "Doctrinal Consensus and Conflict," the members of this section wish first to record their gratitude for the privilege of having been participants in an earnest doctrinal discussion involving representatives of so many of the Christian communions. The breadth of its official and unofficial representation alone constitutes a significant historical event and an ecumenical accomplishment.

The section was specifically asked to study a) the degree and kind of consensus in faith which binds us together, b) the extent and significance of our common use of the historic confessions, c) the degree of conformity and freedom in faith which should be considered essential to Christian unity, d) the points of conflict in the realm of doctrine, e) the kind of consensus which should precede union as distinguished from that which can only develop after closer fellowship, and f) the diversity which is appropriate in view of our allegiance to Jesus Christ.

The section had at its disposal the findings of three study groups which had engaged in discussions and studies related to the specific assignment of the section over a two-year period (Saskatoon, Vancouver, Minneapolis). The Saskatoon group arrived at a very high degree of consensus, centering in the Person of Christ and the Word of God, and extending into many aspects of the doctrine of the Church. This group holds that "the unity we seek to express under God should be sufficiently elastic to permit varieties of doctrinal expression provided that they all maintain the Christological faith of the historic Church, with its Biblical foundation." The Minneapolis group discovered by the use of its "check-list" a considerable homogeneity of doctrine running across denominational lines, a large agreement on the importance of doctrine to the unity of the Church, and at the same time a wide range of variant teaching both among pastors and laymen, even even in the most doctrinally-minded churches. It finds that "neither clergy nor laity feels any great urge toward organizational unity," and concludes that "the movement toward unity cannot rely heavily on the desire for unity in the contemporary churches," unless the churches become more aware than now of an "imperative" to unity growing out of "the very nature of the Christian faith." The Vancouver group notes that there is a large measure of agreement in the statements of Faith and Order meetings, but feels that they reflect "a tendency to be too complacent about agreement," and obscure the presence in our churches of "disagreements . . . far more fundamental than most of the statements of ecumenical gatherings would suggest."

In addition to the reports of the study groups, a statement on "Christian Unity As Viewed by the Eastern Orthodox Church," submitted by representatives of the Greek Orthodox Church in the U.S.A., was available to the section for study and discussion. It defined the general ecumenical position of the Eastern Orthodox Church with specific reference to the theme of this Conference.

Of the four papers presented to the evening Plenary Sessions by chairman of the respective Faith and Order Commissions, this section found Dr. Robert L. Calhoun's paper on "Christ and the Church" particularly relevant and helpful to this work.

II. Some General Observations

A. The members of the section are impressed with the gift of unity which is already evident in the willingness of all participants to engage in this theological encounter on an ecumenical basis. This is the fruitage of many years of Faith and Order studies and conversations.

B. Discussion in the section was characterized by a readiness to face central and crucial issues in the realm of doctrine instead of ignoring or by-passing them. There seemed to be a common feeling that sincerity in our desire for unity calls us not only to confront one another but to confront together the Truth of the Gospel in all its fulness. We seemed agreed that "The way to the center is the way to unity."

C. The members of the section found that when they thus faced "the center" and spoke of "Jesus Christ," the "Word of God," the "Gospel," the "Church," there was a rather large body of common discourse which made for meaningful and fruitful discussion in spite of diversities in other areas and in the theological explication of this common vocabulary.

D. The section found the wide range of tradition represented by the membership both an obstacle and a challenge. The various traditions have developed differing and sometimes distinctive ways of clarifying and formulating the faith in theological systems and doctrinal statements. They have also developed varied institutional structures and practices, many of which have doctrinal implications. This variety adds to both the problems and the promise of fruitful communication.

E. As we have engaged in this discussion of "Consensus and Conflict" we have been made aware of the necessity of having some comprehensive perspective which can include both our consensus and our conflict without doing injustice to either. Such ecumenical discussions as that in which we have engaged may be particularly helpful in achieving such a perspective.

F. A pronounced emphasis which recurred throughout the discussion was the importance of the "servant-image" for the Christian Church, its theology and its mission. The judgment was expressed, and broadly affirmed, that in the Bible the image of the "servant" has a centrality and significance which Christianity in our time needs to rediscover. It was as the "servant of the Lord" that Israel was called upon to fulfill her destiny. Jesus Christ Himself glorified in fulfilling the role of a servant who lived "to serve, not to be served." Paul interpreted the significance of the Incarnation and work of Jesus Christ by affirming that in Him the Eternal Son of God decisively and exultantly took the form of a servant. In the Church of today as well as in the world of today, it is of

first-rate importance that the significance of the "servant-image" be discovered by persons, groups, and institutions. It was held that unity will be promoted among the churches in their apprehension of Christian truth and in their dedication to the Church's mission under the Lordship of Christ when they take seriously the normative character of the "servant" for Christian thought and action.

III. Doctrinal Consensus, Conflict and Diversity

A. *The Degree and Kind of Consensus in Faith that Binds us Together*

We have found ourselves bound together in a common faith that impels us to a common witness, despite the variety of doctrinal standards found in our churches. "Faith" here means something more than "doctrine," though closely related to doctrine; it means the trustful response of the whole man to God's self-revelation in Christ. Primarily, the faith we share is a common commitment to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and a common mission to bring to all mankind the message of the great salvation He offers. When this faith becomes a message (*kerygma*) it demands an intellectual expression and begins to be articulated into doctrine. The articulation of doctrine must never become an idol (i.e., an end in itself) but is ministerial to the Church's inner life of worship and nurture and her out-going mission to the world. The Church needs a massive and vertebrate form for her faith, and finds abundant material in God's self-revelation for such a reasoned-out message, but Christian doctrine must never be divorced from Christian devotion and obedience, and must therefore never wholly abandon the poetry of faith for the prose of doctrinal elaboration. If this partnership between faith and doctrine is maintained, we may expect consensus in faith to be accompanied by a high degree of consensus in doctrine, and this is indeed what we find among ourselves.

The center of our doctrinal consensus is Christ Himself as the Incarnate Word of God and the sacrificial Saviour of the world in whom God bore the sins of mankind and founded a new humanity. At the beginning of the Faith and Order Movement, faith in the divine-human Lord and Saviour tended to stand in a sort of splendid isolation, as the one clear point on which we were united. It is still the center of our consensus, but under the influence of the Biblical renewal there is now a growing sense of its connection with other basic Christian doctrines: God's Covenant with His People Israel, fulfilled and renewed in Christ; the Church and the new People of God, the Body of Christ, the Community (*koinonia*) of the Holy Spirit, pressing on toward its consummation in a new community of mankind and a new heaven and earth. The stern events of our time have taught us to see new meaning in the dramatic conflict between the Kingdom of Christ and the God-opposing powers, as portrayed in the New Testament; but our faith in Christ's ultimate Lordship over the world as well as the Church, stands firm as the final capstone in the arch of faith that now begins to tower over the wreckage and confusion of our time. There has been a great recovery in recent years of the centrality of Biblical revelation in Christian doctrine—though this has not penetrated all the curricula of Christian education—both as the record of the mighty acts of God leading up to our redemption in Christ, and also as the source of intelligible truths expressed in inspired words, whereby the message of our redemption can be spelled out. While we differ in our theories of revelation, reason and Biblical inspiration, we are united in looking to the witness of Holy Scripture in the Church, as the *sine qua non of* authentic Christian doctrine.

B. *Extent and Significance of Our Common Use of the Historic Confessions*

When we compare the actual *use* of historic confessions in different churches we find them sharply divided between *creedal* churches, where they are largely used for catechetical instruction and in public worship, and *non-creedal* churches, where there is grave objection to using them at all—except as historical documents. When we examine the *significance* of the use of creeds and confessions, we find this sharp polarization much diminished. For example, some non-creedal churches of the "covenant" type express their opposition to confessionalism by declaring that they use creeds only as "testimonies not tests" of faith. Yet there are churches of the creedal type which use the very same word, "testimony," to define their own use of their historic confessions. All our communions agree that their creeds and confessions are subordinate to Scripture, at least in the negative sense that they must not contradict Scripture. They further agree that these confessions must be interpreted and reinterpreted in the light of Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Those churches which make no use of historic confessions actually use "tests" or norms of other sorts (such as the Quaker "queries" or the "covenants" of other churches) to keep up standards of Christian commitment and Christian instruction among their members. We agree with the Lausanne call (1927) to re-examine the content, the historical significance and the meaning for us of the great ecumenical definitions of the early church councils; and we also agree that when the Church's very existence is challenged again, by anti-Christian trends and dangerously perverted versions of the Christian message, such threats need to be countered by similarly pointed confessions of the mind of Christ. A good recent example of such a contemporary confession, formulated with specific reference to the current renaissance of Hinduism and the deluge of communism, is that of the Batak Protestant Church in Indonesia.

C. *Conformity and Freedom in Faith*

The section wishes to reassert as sufficient ground of membership in the Ecumenical Movement the confession that Jesus Christ is "God and Saviour." While some of us are dissatisfied with this form of words, all of us recognize that loyalty to Christ as God's Incarnate Word and our Saviour is the very heart of our given unity. Every church will wish to supplement and interpret this central faith; none can repudiate it without ceasing to be united to her sister communions. This common confession is rooted in revelation as witnessed in Scripture and received in the Church through the Spirit. The authority of the Faith, then, is located in the Scriptures, the historic tradition of the Church, and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit.[1] Diversity of doctrine not contrary to this authority reflects the riches of God's grace and the diversity of His gifts to the Church. The unity we seek is not to be found in enforced conformity to a detailed, complete, unchangeable system of doctrine. Our only absolute captivity is to Christ and His mission; this captivity sets us totally free to realize the purpose for which we were created. Freedom to interpret Christian truth in varied ways, as the Spirit guides us to apply it to changing situations and different men, is part of Christian liberty—and responsibility. Against what seem to be real perversions of the Gospel, all are bound to protest in the name of the truth; but none of our churches is so "authori-

[1]Orthodox and Protestant churches will name these factors in different order, but it was already agreed between them at Edinburgh (1937) that the *living* Word of God (Christ) precedes the Church's tradition while the written Word of the New Testament existed as verbal proclamation and tradition before it was written.

tative" that it forbids all difference on special points of doctrine (*theologeumena*).

D. *Points of Deepest Conflict*

We have to distinquish between desirable diversity, *creative* conflict which helps to get truth stated, and *destructive* conflict which obscures the truth. Diversity and creative conflict spring from our finiteness; destructive conflict from our sin. Destructive conflict in matters of doctrine exists at various levels between member churches within the fellowship of the World Council of Churches, and also between the member churches and others which find it impossible to seek membership in it. All conflicts which keep churches in opposition are serious because they make it hard to hear the voice of Christ above the clamor of rival churches; but the latter type of conflict, which now keeps Roman Catholics and some Protestants out of official ecumenical confrontation, is *most* serious. Continued study and conference are recommended, to see if it is really necessary for all such groups to stay out on doctrinal grounds, when other groups, quite as different from the Protestant majority (e.g., certain Eastern Orthodox churches) are already in. Conflicts also exist among the member churches in the World Council, sometimes dividing them from one another, sometimes cutting across denominational lines and sometimes reducible to differences of emphasis. Examples of such conflicts may be found in varying theories of religious knowledge, theories concerning the nature of the union between the divine and the human in Jesus Christ, varying concepts of the nature of the Church, and varying ways in which the Lord and Head of the Church is related to the concrete life of the Church and its members (e.g., in the various "means of grace" specially preferred in different communions). The conflicts center, as has often been noted, in the part of Christian doctrine dealing with the Ministry and the Sacraments, while they are at a minimum in the doctrine of God and the doctrine of Christ.

E. *Consensus Which Should Precede Unity and That Which Must Await Closer Fellowship*

There is of course a given consensus already existing, concerning which we have already spoken under (A). This given consensus does not yet fully express the oneness of the Church which it is God's will for His people to realize. We call attention, therefore, to those areas in which further agreement needs to be reached before we can move toward closer oneness. (The necessity of agreement will vary, of course, according to the nature of the unity we seek; "mutual recognition" requires less than "corporate unity.")

1. The nature of the Church, its ministry and its sacraments. Here greater agreement is needed, based on much further study and conference between the various types of churches, before some of them can consider intercommunion, and others can consider reunion.

2. The nature of the authority and inspiration of the Bible. Here is one of the chief causes of disunity among Protestants. The relations between the Bible and reason, and the nature of revelation (whether expressed in "propositions" or "events," or both) need particular study in this connection.

3. Finally, the nature of the unity we seek. On this, as noted above, will depend the degree of doctrinal unity necessary beforehand. It is quite plain that participants in the Ecumenical Movement are hoping for different outcomes. It is good to make these differences conscious and try to resolve them.

After the unity we seek (or which God wills for us) reaches each stage of realization, the ministry of the Holy Spirit will lead (in the process of growing together) to a profounder appreciation of the gift of the Church and a profounder understanding of the meaning of its worship, its sacramental *koinonia*, and its mission in the world. Some united churches have deliberately left the drafting of a longer doctrinal statement of faith until after they have merged upon a very simple "basis of union," including a short declaration of their common faith.

F. *"Diversities to be Welcomed" in the Expression of Our Common "Allegiance"*

We have already distinguished "diversity" from "conflict" under (D) above. Our common allegiance to Jesus Christ means a loving obedience to Him, which may be expressed in diverse ways. In his missionary work, the Apostle Paul became "all things to all men" that he might "by all means win some." We welcome such diversity in the life and thought of the churches, as a manifestation of the "fruits of the Spirit" and a contribution to the "fullness of Christ." Diversities of this sort are found in liturgical practice, in cultural tradition, in types of Christian service, in styles of Christian art, in ways of proclaiming the faith. Whether diversity in theological doctrine can be encouraged without endangering the Christian faith itself, is questioned by some of us. Diversity of faith has often resulted from diversity of theology. It is important to distinguish the divine revelation which is the center of our common faith from the human systems of theology which relate this revelation to contemporary schools of philosophy and changing world situations. The purity of the common faith is better preserved by encouraging creative conflict between theological systems than by prematurely finalizing any one of them. (Doctors of divinity are stewards of divine revelation, but the history of doctrine proves that they do not possess divine omniscience.) As Dr. Calhoun remarked in his address on "Christ and the Church," the mystery of God's infinite Being can never be fully resolved by finite minds, for "God as self-disclosed to us men remains mystery, not only in some secrets of His Being that remain undisclosed, but also in His self-revelation itself." We cannot therefore hope or desire to eliminate all diversities from Christian doctrine. We walk together in the light of the same divine-human Face; we bow together before the same ineffable Mystery, content to argue with one another's best judgments, since none can claim to have plumbed the infinite depths of the Godhead.

In the work of this section we have repeatedly verified the Lausanne principle of "comprehension." That is, when the seemingly conflicting doctrines of different churches are carefully defined in face-to-face conference, they are first found to be less contradictory than they appeared to be, and then found to be diverse aspects of a comprehensive truth which all need to consider in order to deepen and correct their own favorite views. (See point (B) above.) Every American in our day needs to be a world citizen in order to be a good American, so every confessional theologian needs to be an ecumenical theologian in order to be a good representative of his own confession. The sparks of comprehension that flew between Baptists and Lutherans, Quakers and Orthodox, will continue to illuminate the minds and hearts of all of us who took part in these discussions.

Not all doctrinal differences can speedily be turned into fruitful diversities so as to be resolved by mutual comprehension. The doctrinal differences concerning the ministry, the sacraments and others mentioned under (D) above cannot be overcome at this time, and constitute an impasse which must be examined and re-examined by all the methods recommended at the Lund Conference. However, the progress that has already been made by the Faith and Order Movement,

and our experience in this section, give us confidence that here too, destructive conflict may someday be transformed through creative conflict into a more comprehensive truth that will include us all. For us all, Jesus Christ is the Truth. Theology or doctrinal labor is the service of our minds humbly and joyfully offered to Him, and therefore to one another. Our hope in seeking unity resides not in endeavors to master the other man with our superior insights, but in love to serve our brother and to be served by him as servants together of the Word of God.

IV. Recommendation

The section records its conviction that there is need for a continuation and extension of the kind of theological exchange which has here taken place, to all sections of our continent. The work of the sixteen study groups which made preparatory studies for this Conference give evidence of both the possibility and fruitfulness of such a project. It is hoped that the encouragement which has been given to Faith and Order studies through this Conference will establish the work of Faith and Order as a proportionally larger part of the total ecumenical enterprise in this area. END

THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE

(Continued from page 15) that both Newton and Newton's dog saw the apple fall. Only Newton deduced therefrom the law of gravitation that profoundly affected future research. The interesting thing about phenomenal language is that it remains fixed. So long as we have eyes and ears like our present ones, we must see and hear as we do now, however much science may advance. We can correct focal irregularity by means of carefully adjusted lenses but we cannot prevent a man from seeing double without such aids. For that reason phenomenal language is preserved side by side with the more technical phraseology developed through the advance of science. No one questions the competence of a scientist because he remarks that he feels in rather low spirits. It is no reflection on the accuracy of the Bible to assert that it employes phenomenal language.

LIMITATION OF RANGE

If, however, the use of phenomenal language imposes certain limits on biblical phraseology, we do well to remember that the range of science imposes necessary limits on it. It has repeatedly been pointed out that creation cannot be demonstrated by purely scientific methods. Science can only deal with the given. As it has been expressed, "Science can only ask, How? It is the province of theology to ask, Why?" Hume imperfectly perceived this relation between science and creation when he declared that inferences from creation were doubtful since "the world is a singular effect." Followers of Hume like Mill and Spencer did not pursue this particular theory with any ardor. Given a world, we can investigate its character. But that leaves wide open the intriguing questions—Why should a world such as we interpret come into being? How did such a world come into being?

Keeping these simple cautions in mind we can confidently assert that the Bible, so far from being discredited by science, has been a prime influence in directing men's minds towards a closer investigation of the things of nature.

The Hebrew people viewed this aspiration in the words of the Psalmist: "O Lord how manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches" (Ps. 104:24). St. Paul expressed the same truth: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20).

CONSISTENCY OF SCRIPTURE

Space permits the enumeration of only a few remarkable features in the Bible presentation. The Bible places man at the summit of creation. This is also an implied axiom of science. It is through man's observation and reflection that the secrets of the universe are disclosed. But why should man be able to interpret a world which he did not make? The Bible's answer is: Man was made in the image of God. Job tells us that God "hangeth the earth upon nothing" and "compasseth the waters with bounds." Science discovers that the law of gravitation holds the earth in place and that a due proportion of land and water is essential if living creatures such as we are to continue to exist. Peter tells us, "the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Science, since its previous picture of the last men living in snow huts on the equator, now by the discovery of nuclear fission at least affords the possibility of such a cataclysm.

Sir James Jeans asserted that the best statement of the origin of our world was contained in the words, "Let there be light" in the Genesis creation story.

We have to guard against importing scientific technicalities into the ordinary language of the Scriptures, but the few instances given are sufficient to demonstrate that the supposed scientific errors in the Bible are the consequence of a too-rigid demand that ordinary speech should express precisely the findings of natural science. A schoolmaster who counseled his class to remain still would be tempted to take the cane to a smart youngster who said, "I cannot, sir, because I am formed out of protons and electrons that move with incredible rapidity."

The Bible was given to lead us to the "First Great Cause least understood." It suited its message to the simple apprehension of the ordinary reader and yet it exhibits a caution in utterance that impels us to seek further and further into the mysteries of time and sense. END

EUTYCHUS and his kin

HUMPTY-DUMPTY

Since Lesson I in Ecclesian has had unspeakable success, I am encouraged to introduce your readers to other fields of learning. The original source material which follows shows the value of a scholarly interpretation of a familiar text:

Humpty-Dumpty sat on a wall:
Humpty-Dumpty had a great fall.

We need not stop to discuss the critical questions which surround this classical text. It is generally understood by modern scholars to be a conflation of H and D. The Humptyist (H) may well have written. "Humpty sat on a wall." The original Deutero-Dumptyist (D^2) probably had the reading, "Dumpty had a fall." A later redactor, acquainted with both traditions, and struck by the rhyming possibilities (Humpty/Dumpty; wall/fall) joined the conflicting accounts in a couplet. The adjective "great" is almost certainly a later gloss, which may be traced to lapsarian circles in Great Falls, Minnesota. The *formgeschichtlich* school traces the term to a *sitz-im-kindergarten* which favored exaggeration and legendary embellishment, but this has now been decisively rejected by I. E. Hohlkopfig (Z.A.G. XCMIII: 4, p. 116).

Our primary interest, however, is not in the vicissitudes of history which led to the challenging statement of the text. The fascinating speculations of Glowinkel linking our couplet with the festival of the Easter egg roll cannot be commented on here. We pass over the moralizing and allegorizing that many have found in C. Dodgson, *Through the Looking-Glass* (Ch. I, "Humpty-Dumpty").

Instead we turn to the simple declaration of the text. To be sure, the literal picture of an animate egg in a sitting posture on a stone wall is absurd from the scientific standpoint, for it escapes scientific categories. This fall did not occur in calendar time, but in the egg's act time, primal history. It gives mythological expression to the human predicament. As the Monarchist observes in those existential lines which he has had added in conclusion:

All the king's horses
and all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty-Dumpty
in his place again.

EUTYCHUS

PROTESTANT AWAKENING

I would give no more heed to what this "former Jesuit trainee" says than I would to the word of an ex-Mason who writes against Free Masonry. If you would state the Catholic position truly, why not call on such men as Msgr. Sheen, Karl Adam, Frank Sheed and many others?

STANLEY H. MULLEN
Supt., The Akron District
Methodist Church
Akron, Ohio

I heartily agree . . . . that the time has come for a Protestant Awakening. . . .

JOSEPH R. BOGLE
First Methodist Church
Belmont, N. C.

The author's fairness, fine temper, information and urgency of deepening spiritual life is a fine presentation. . . .

Pierce, Neb. AMEL WHITWER

While we watch sputnik, a revolution is growing in the United States. And thousands of Protestant young people, whose parents manifest utter indifference to their indoctrination, take lightly the requirements demanded in marrying Roman Catholic young people. The word "tolerance" has become a fetish. . . .

First E.U.B. Church J. C. ROBERTS
New Castle, Ind.

Rome scruples not to implement its totalitarian ends by sanctimoniously waving the flag of democracy, liberty and morality. This sort of tactic assumes the dimensions of a frightening reality when laid beside the current enthusiastic publicity campaign being staged for the Roman Catholic senator from Massachusetts, John F. Kennedy. . . . Could this be the harbinger of the first really serious effort of Rome to try her wings in the American political air? . . . . We may soon witness the *exempla gratia* of the use of tolerance to enslave the land of the free. RONALD P. BROWN
Disciples of Christ Church
Holland, Mich.

Catholicism exists without the Papacy, the maze of Mariology and indulgences. He ("a former Jesuit trainee") should have found Catholicism without Rome—it exists in the Anglican (Episcopal in U. S.), Old Catholic, Polish National Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Communions. As a priest of the Episcopal Church I should like him to know he must not leave the Church which our Lord Jesus Christ founded, but awaken to the fact that Catholicism . . . . exists in non-Roman but Catholic communions I have mentioned. . . . We need not a protestant awakening, but a Catholic Revival which is now taking place in the non-Roman but Catholic world. . . .

St. George's Church WILLIAM J. MILES
Riviera Beach, Fla.

Have you made a note . . . . that the National Association of Evangelicals (1405 G Street, Washington 5, D. C.) is offering newspaper mats to combat Knights of Columbus propaganda in our newspapers and magazines?

J. M. MELLICK
Disciples of Christ Church
Wellington, O.

I warmly welcome any former Jesuit into the Protestant fold, but I do not share the panic . . . . about Roman Catholicism taking over America. They ought to look around a bit and observe the might and virility of Protestantism. . . . Within the past two years three former Catholics became members of our church . . . . one of them an attorney, another the president of perhaps the largest trucking company in the state, another a brilliant graduate of Amherst. This Fall eight children started our Sunday School from mixed marriages. . . .

If what is to emerge as triumphant . . . . is to arrive at that pinnacle through deceit, intrigue, clericalism, heresy, beer and bingo, then I wouldn't want any part of such a church anyway, for it couldn't possibly be Christ's Church though it had all the statistics on its side and none of the real power and true victory.

We certainly do need a continuing Reformation, but let the power and motivation come from God. . . . It was God himself who wanted the Reformation . . . . and its genius and future are not to be ultimately determined by the manipulations of man, no matter how high his steeple, how scarlet his hat, how vain

his heart and greedy his ecclesiastical hands. . . . FREDERICK WYNGARDEN
Westminster Church
Grand Rapids, Mich.

I think the "former Jesuit trainee" paints too pessimistic a picture when he says "no other doors are open to these Americans," "no evangelist is calling them," "no organization tries to help them." Has he never heard of Christ's Mission in New York City which is entirely composed of ex-priests. . . . Has he never heard of . . . . Jose Fernandez and his Protestant-Catholic Information Center in Philadelphia? Has he not read of the recent victory in the courts by an organization who had written into their charter that their primary purpose was to convert Catholics? And then what about many, like myself, who are converted Catholics and are active in the Protestant ministry? Much is being done. . . .
First Baptist Church JOHN PAUL PRO
Jeannette, Pa.

TITLE TO THE LAND

Israel's title to Palestine from the river Nile to the Euphrates rests not upon her obedience to God, but upon the unconditional covenant God made with Abraham. No acts of disobedience can nullify that covenant. Israel's disobedience was the cause of her world-wide dispersion among the nations. That dispersion will end, and Israel, according to the covenant and the prophetic promises, will return and possess her land. The Arab . . . has no divine title to a single inch of the land . . . no power can exterminate Israel, as Nassar and his supporters will find out. Those who bless Israel, God will bless. Those who curse her, God will curse. ALEXANDER A. MURRAY
Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada

Whether the Arabs had a right to use their land as they pleased is another matter, but superior agricultural know-how is hardly an argument for removing almost an entire population from their ancestral land. WILFRED T. F. CASTLE
Holy Trinity Church House,
Cannes, France

It is shameful for people as responsible as clergymen to be enslaved by misguiding Zionist propaganda. . . . My family, and one million Arabs like me, are refugees from Palestine. FARID SALAMEN
Beirut, Lebanon

The articles of O. T. Allis and W. M. Smith, whilst provoking . . . still lack completeness. Though I am not a Jew nationally, yet I think the question would be somewhat illuminated by a contribution from a Christian Jew, or for that matter one from the hand of an unconverted Jew.

Dr. G. C. Morgan once raised this issue in his book, *Voices of the Minor Prophets;* on page 10 he says, "the chosen people have failed, and are excommunicated from the economy of God." That is surely a damning proposition, especially in relation to his unchangeability, his faithfulness to the promises and finally to the mild doctrine of election to place and office.

Further, this is a very pregnant question in view of the state and status of national Israelis in world affairs today. Quite incidentally we British Christians are proud of the part we have played in the restoration and preservation of Israelis in their present "foothold" to the Land of Promise. True, it may have been done selfishly, or even without any intent or purpose of aiding the plan of God. Yet it is a fact, along with many other historical interpositions, sanctified to the establishment of God's ancient people.

So I conclude by recommending that some able and willing Christian Jew give us his interpretation of the manifold promises of both Testaments.

By the way, let me take this opportunity of thanking you for CHRISTIANITY TODAY. W. M. JACKSON
Bishop of Auckland
Durham, England

ARABS AND ISRAELIS

The article by Oswald T. Allis (Dec. 24, 1956, issue) has only just now come to my hand. May I be permitted to comment on some of the *"facts"*, as distinct from opinions, mentioned in the article:

1. The author states that the establishment of Israel was "highly dangerous to the peace of the world."

While of course the establishment of Israel was accompanied by bloodshed and warfare, and while such aggression was dangerous to the peace of the world, it is important to emphasize that it did not come about by Israel's action but by Arab warfare and aggression against the people and later against the State of Israel.

The Arab warfare which threatened to destroy the Jewish community in Palestine and upset the peace of the world began on the morrow of the U.N. Partition Plan of Nov. 29, 1947. Mr. Trygve Lie, the then-Secretary General of the U.N., wrote in his memoirs: "From the first week of December, 1947, disorder in Palestine had begun to mount. The Arabs repeatedly had asserted that they would resist partition by force. They seemed to be determined to drive that point home by assaults upon the Jewish community in Palestine" (*In the Cause of Peace,* p. 163). In its First Special Report to the Security Council, the U.N. Palestine Commission reported: "Powerful Arab interests, both inside and outside Palestine, are defying the resolution of the General Assembly, and are engaged in a deliberate effort to alter by force the settlement envisaged therein" (A/AC.21/9 Feb. 16, 1948).

On May 15, 1948, the armies of five Arab states invaded the territory of the newly established State of Israel. Their action was condemned by the international community. The U. S. representative at the U.N. called it an "international aggression," and the Security Council resolved that the action of the Arab states constitute "a threat to peace within the meaning of Article 39 of the Charter."

Ever since then, and for the last nine and a half years, it was Arab policies which have endangered the peace of the world. They have waged a campaign of border violence, carried on economic warfare against Israel in the form of blockades and boycott, have concluded arms deals which introduced both Soviet arms and technicians into the area, and have insisted on a state of war with Israel; they have refused to negotiate any settlement with Israel which would ease the tension and lead towards a lasting peace in the area.

2. The author then suggests that the establishment of Israel forced "hundreds of thousands of Arabs out of it."

The fact is that it was not the establishment of Israel which created the Arab refugee problem; Arab aggression, warfare and invasion of Israel was responsible for the creation of the refugee problem. The Arabs launched a war of destruction against Israel in defiance of the United Nations resolution. Their responsibility for the war was clearly admitted by the Arabs (U.N. document S/743—1948) and established by the U.N. (U.N. document S/902 July 15, 1948). The refugee problem is a direct result of that war. The Arabs cannot first declare a war of destruction and then wash their hands of any responsibility for its outcome. Moreover, there is ample evidence which indicates that the mass exodus of the Arabs from Israel was carried out under the express Arab orders "encouraged by the boasting of an unrealistic Arabic press and the irresponsible utterances of some of the Arab

leaders, that it could be only a matter of some weeks before the Jews were defeated by the armies of the Arab states . . ." (Edward Atiyah, Director of the Arab League Propaganda Office in London, in his book, *The Arabs*, page 183). This fact has been verified by countless statements of Arab spokesmen, the refugees themselves, British sources and accounts by eyewitnesses.

I have confined myself to a discussion of some of the facts, not the opinions, expressed by the author. . . .

Embassy of Israel — H. Y. Orgel
Washington, D. C. — Press Attache

The above letter from Mr. Orgel, being written on "Embassy of Israel" stationery, may be regarded as at least semi-official. It is to be noted therefore that his argument begins with the Partition Plan of 1947, the assumption being that the Israelis are entitled to the territory of which they have taken gradual and forcible possession, and that the resulting threats to the peace of the world are entirely due to the refusal of the Arabs to accept the Plan forced on them by the United Nations. My contention was that the wholesale immigration of Jews into Palestine which was tolerated and fostered by the British under their mandate, and which placed the Jews in a dominant position which led directly to the forming of the State of Israel, represented the seizing by the Zionists of territory which was not their own and to which they were not entitled—a simple act of aggression.

Mr. Orgel, as an Israeli, and the friends of the Israeli State demand that the Arabs accept this act of aggression and its consequences at a *fait accompli*. They are to recognize that, whether rightly or wrongly, "Israel is there to stay." This is of course a red rag to the Arabs; and it is all the more provocative because it is perfectly plain that the Israelis are determined to increase their hold on Palestine by every means in their power. The present partitionment of the land is a monstrosity as every intelligent person must admit. The recent explosion over Suez and the extreme reluctance of the Israeli government to evacuate the territory which it had over-run is a clear indication of what Israel proposes to do as soon as a more favorable opportunity arises. It is this which makes the State of Israel a menace to the peace of the world. And back of it all lies the question which Mr. Orgel does not even mention, whether the "State of Israel" has any moral right to exist.

Wayne, Pa. — Oswald T. Allis

SEGREGATION

Dr. Henlee Barnette is an eminent theologian, held in high respect by Southern Baptists. But in his article, "What Can Southern Baptists Do?" he seems to let his abstractions out-distance his practical insight.

When he implies that all Southern Baptist preachers believe segregation to be un-Christian, he is arguing from a generalized false assumption. Many of us do not believe it is either un-Christian or un-Democratic.

He is perfectly correct when he states that the Bible has no proof texts to support either integration or segregation. The texts and incidents which he cites in support of the principle of integration lack both clarity and completeness. Just as many, or more texts can be cited in opposition. His attempt to equate the Kingdom of God with the body politic is an amazing maneuver for a Baptist.

Having lived all my life in close proximity with Negroes; having preached often and conducted Vacation Bible Schools in their churches; having met in their Pastors' Conferences; having served with them in the Army; and having many of them for personal friends, I am amazed to learn that I am in "consecrated ignorance" of them.

Dr. Barnette urges Southern Baptist preachers to preach their convictions. This is always good counsel. He will surely accord the right—and the duty—of the many Baptist Preachers who do not share his convictions to preach and stand for their own. Even at the cost of being called un-Christian by their mentors.

A. H. Simmons
Warren Baptist Church
Martinez, Georgia

With high evaluation, I greatly appreciate Christianity Today. . . . Now and then I am provoked to take issue with contentions of certain articles which are clearly unfair and untenable. In the issue of June 24th appears such an article written by Dr. H. H. Barnette, titled "What Can Southern Baptists Do."

He would have all believe that those who believe in any kind of segregation are haters of all races. . . . I know many of both races who believe in segregation who have nothing but love in their hearts for each other. — G. P. Lamier
Mt. Tabor and Beulah Baptist Churches
Branchville, South Carolina

THE GOD OF NUMBERS

We Protestants have bowed down to a new God, a God of numbers. We try to usher in the Kingdom of God by adopting catchy slogans such as "A Million More in '54" and "Come Alive in '55."

Will someone please tell me the difference between the native of India who goes down to the Ganges River and dips up holy soil, moulds it into a symbol, takes it home to dry, and bows down and worships it as his God, and the typical Protestant minister, or Sunday School Superintendent who, when he enters the sanctuary, goes to the bulletin board on Sunday morning and prays to his man-made God of numbers this prayer:

O God of numbers on the wall:
Give me 1700, or none at all,
Lest I, like the Apostle Paul,
Be 'let down' o'er the city wall.

Instead, it would seem well for us to pray:

O God and Father of us all;
Remove from mind the record on the wall.
Forgive the love of numbers as our goals,
And change our love, from numbers into souls.

Henry Langford
Shockoe Baptist Church
Chatham, Va.

ON THE MARCH

Your excellent periodical adequately fills a most needy gap in Christian thought and expression. . . . The pulse of the Church will quicken because of your admirable efforts. . . . J. Thomas Betzer
Granada Hills, Calif.

Appreciate your conservative position, without fighting about it; and I appreciate the scholarship (. . . not always present in conservative circles). . . .
First Baptist Church — Louis G. Nelson
Atchison, Kans.

Your type of magazine was much needed in evangelical circles. It is intellectually satisfying as well as spiritually refreshing. I believe that it will increasingly become a powerful force in the religious life of our country. . . .

Arthur M. Clarke
Exec. Secretary
Nebraska Baptist State Convention
Omaha, Neb.

Please find enclosed $5 for one year's subscription of your interesting periodical. . . . The time is surely at hand when we have a sufficient certainty of the great Christian tenets that we should stop arguing about them and start imparting them. . . . — E. S. Lautenslager
St. Andrews' Church
Sudbury, Ontario

THREE MEN LOOK AT COMMUNISM

Three prominent clergymen, representing the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant faiths, warned that the evil of communism as it exists today derives from its basic philosophy and not from any distortion of the principles upon which it was founded.

The clergymen, *Dr. S. Andhil Fineberg,* community-relations consultant of the American Jewish Committee; *Bishop Fulton J. Sheen,* national director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith of the Catholic Church, and *Dr. Daniel A. Poling,* editor of *The Christian Herald,* made their statements in consultations with the staff of the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

In releasing the statements on "The Ideological Fallacies Of Communism," Chairman *Francis E. Walter* declared that they "demonstrate again the basic incompatability of religion with communism in any form."

"The communist system," he continued, "is inherently evil for the fundamental reason that it denies the principles of God and morality upon which human society must be founded. As *J. Edgar Hoover,* director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation has remarked, 'Those who hate God always bring misery in their wake. They are brutal, cruel and deceitful. Communism denies and destroys every spiritual value. No church and no church member can temporize with it.'"

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> "Lacking a spiritual basis for existence, communist ideologists conceive of people as having no other worthy objective but material prosperity and military might. All other human ideals, hopes, and aspirations are sacrificed for these. And, in pursuit of these goals for the nation as a whole, Communist rulers assume the right to deal with all human beings as though they were the property and chattel of the state. Democratic leaders would never set up one-party government. You will recall that, when the great emancipator Moses was told that several people were speaking against him in the camp, he welcomed that dissent and said, 'Would that all the people were prophets and that God would put his spirit in all of them.'"

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With reference to the relationship between the philosophy of communism and communism in action, Bishop Sheen observed:

> ". . . as in Christianity the word became flesh, or truth became incarnate; in communism the ideology has become action. There is no great diversity between any principles of communism and communism in action. And that is why many people go wrong in judging communism, because they not knowing its ideology, do not understand the present action.
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In regard to the reason for the tremendous inroads made by communism in the course of the last 50 years, Bishop Sheen stated:

> "There are many reasons for that. One reason is the spiritual vacuum that has been created in the world. The modern world has lost its faith, it has lost its goal and its purpose. And the world became sick and tired of milk-and-water systems where there was nothing so sacred that you could dedicate your life to it, and nothing so evil that you should risk your life to destroy it. And communism comes into a world that is sick with relativism, and offers an absolute, and men find a loyalty and a dedication and a consecration which gives them great faith in a political system, without imposing any individual morality."

Among the courses of action which he suggested in undertaking to cope with the international communist menace was the expulsion of Russia from the United Nations, and the insistence by the West on the liberation of certain suppressed peoples.

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In regard to the manner in which the forces of freedom can compete in the world market place of ideas with communist ideology he said:

> ". . . We need to emphasize not what material things we have here, but the realities of freedom and the fact that communism is slavery. It is the destruction of the very aspirations of the soul. It is enslavement of the body, and you can prove that by pointing to communist slave camps all over the world, and not only the enslavement of the body, but the enslavement of the mind and the soul. And remember one thing; there are more than one billion human beings who believe in one God—the Moslem, the Buddhist, the Roman Catholic, the Protestant, and the Jew.
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Campus Crusade

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The seriousness of success in such an endeavor can be appreciated by the assertion that less than three per cent of all students played a major role in turning the tide toward communism in Red China.

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Two Questions

In the wake of Little Rock's racial trouble, the following two questions are asked and answered for CHRISTIANITY TODAY by the *Rev. W. O. Vaught Jr.*, pastor of the Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock:

Question—Does the Christian Gospel have an answer to this intricate and involved problem?

Answer—Yes, the Christian Gospel does have an answer, and in my opinion, the only answer. The Christian Gospel teaches that all men are equal in the sight of God and all men must be redeemed by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The Gospel evaluates man not in the light of the color of his skin or the national or religious background he has had but in the light of his spiritual need. This Gospel lifts man above prejudice and evaluates man on the basis of his innate capacities, his intellectual capabilities and his place in the Kingdom of God.

Our Gospel is based on a premise which Jesus enunciated, that love is stronger than hate. Love put into practice will eventually give a solution to this intricate problem which we now face. Love proclaims equality of opportunity for everybody. Therefore, there is no immediate answer to this staggering problem we now face in this nation. The answer waits on the slow process of the Gospel of Christ gradually changing the minds and hearts of our people. Someone has said, "The ground is level around the cross." This being true, the closer we get to the cross the more our individual differences vanish.

It has been said, "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly small." Every Christian in the earth is therefore challenged to re-evaluate his own position as a disciple of love and understanding and good will.

Question—What effect will this crisis have on our world mission program?

Answer—We are now one small world community. What happens in Little Rock, Arkansas, is common knowledge in every nation of the earth through radio and television and newspapers. Can we expect a world to really believe we love them and honestly seek to evangelize them unless we give evidence of love and good will to all our neighbors at home? It may be that there has now dawned our finest hour, or greatest opportunity, our golden era in which to tell all men of all races . . . "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons."

The following statement is a report of missionaries from Africa. Read carefully as almost 200 of these missionaries state the case:

"We, the missionaries of the Nigerian Mission of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, have become increasingly aware of the degree to which relationships between the white and Negro races in America determine the effectiveness of carrying out our mission task in Nigeria.

"Nigerians are acutely conscious of the problem of race relations in America. They identify themselves with the American Negro, and they consider racism in any form unjust.

"We believe that racism is inconsistent with, and a hindrance to, the world mission task to which Southern Baptists have committed themselves.

"We sincerely commend Southern Baptist individuals and institutions for the rapid progress made in recent years toward elimination of racism, and for the service they have rendered in meeting the spiritual, educational and social needs of all men.

"We urge all Southern Baptists to work toward the solution of racial problems, realizing that only as these problems are solved can the Great Commission be carried out fully."

William Penn Bible

The Free Library of Philadelphia has acquired a Bible inscribed by *William Penn* in 1705 for presentation to his son John, then 5 years old.

The Bible was acquired from the family of the late *Judge John M. Patterson* of Philadelphia, who bought it at auction in England in 1916. It was given by Penn to the only one of his 13 children born in the new world.

Study Center

Establishment of a study center for research into the Protestant Reformation was initiated recently by a group of scholars meeting at Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis.

They met to form the Foundation for Reformation Research, a project backed by a $100,000 fund that includes a grant from the Aid Association for Lutherans. The foundation will collect original documents, microfilm and other secondary sources from continental, English and Scandinavian phases of the Reformation and related periods. These will be housed in a library and research center at Concordia, to be under a full time director.

Members of the foundation's board of directors are *Dr. Roland H. Bainton* of Yale University; *Dr. Jaroslav J. Pelikan* of the University of Chicago's federated theological faculty; *Dr. Theodore Tappert* of Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia; *Dr. Harold J. Grimm* of Indiana University; *Dr. Carl S. Myer* of Condordia Seminary; and *Dr. Ernest G. Schwiebert*, command historian for the Air Research and Development Command, Baltimore, Md.

Religion and Science

"There is evidence that religion and science have had a closer association in recent years," *Dr. G. O. Simms*, the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, said recently.

He added:

"There are students of the Bible who pay no attention to the exciting discoveries of archaeology or to the history and background of the Scriptures, but Christian scholars for the most part rejoice to have the aid of the linguist, the archaeologist and the scholarly critic from faculties who can throw light upon the setting and significance of the Bible's message.

"The basic assumptions of the Christian religion, so far from antagonizing the scientist or frightening him away, are of the kind to inspire him to deeper discoveries and to help him find wholeness and significance in his own specialized field of research." —S.W.M.

LATIN AMERICA

'A Mortal Sin'

The Puerto Rican Catholic weekly *De Reino a Reino* (From Kingdom to Kingdom), in discussing the Caribbean Crusade of *Dr. Billy Graham*, counseled Catholics to abstain from attending meetings "under pain of incurring in a mortal sin."

Some Catholics were not sympathetic with the statement. A prominent Catholic journalist wrote: "There will be many Catholics, especially among the intellectuals, who will want to find out for themselves if it is true that Billy Graham is indeed a great evangelist, and they will do so, regardless—but that does not mean they will cease to be faithful Catholics of firm conviction."

In Panama, Monsenor *Tomas A. Clavel*, Bishop of David, belittled the Crusade. He saw no reason for so much propaganda about that "Protestant pastor who has nothing new to teach us in this country—we Catholics have nothing to learn from them."

Dr. Graham will tour nine of the Caribbean islands and coastal countries during January and February, climaxing an

ambitious program of simultaneous evangelistic campaigns in both the English and Spanish speaking areas. The Graham team will appear at Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Barbados, Trinidad, Venezuela, Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Mexico. *R. Kenneth Strachan,* general director of the Latin American Mission, will coordinate the effort. —W.D.R.

MIDDLE EAST

Stopping Point

Since the airport in Teheran has been developed into a first-class stopping point on international air routes, Iranians have witnessed the arrivals and departures of an astonishing array of churchmen. The largest group were the members of a tour interested in meeting leaders of many nations and of many religions as well as the missionary and national church leadership in each locality.

Of much value to the Church in Iran has been the ministry of *Dr. Kenneth Cragg,* evangelical scholar in the field of Islamics, whose two-week visit to Anglican and Presbyterian mission areas was only the start of contacts he will continue to develop from his headquarters in Jerusalem. Already his advice in improving the evangelistic approach to Muslims has had an enthusiastic welcome from Iranian and foreign evangelists. Unlike many students of Islam, Dr. Cragg is a missionary who views an understanding of Islam as only the best opening to vigorous evangelism.

Dr. Paul Lindholm, specialist in Christian stewardship and a missionary in the Philippines, initiated a drive for self-support among Iranian Christians during his week of conferences with representatives sent to Teheran for training. His system, based on a thorough exposition of biblical sources, has become the message of a team of missionaries and nationals who will visit churches throughout the coming winter.

Three visitors, all members of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, have focused attention toward East Asia: *Bishop Lesslie Newbigin* of the Church of South India: *Dr. Andrew Thakur Das* of Lahore, Pakistan, and *Bishop Enrique Sobreopena,* presiding bishop of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

Each had an opportunity to address church leaders, the net effect being that many an Iranian Christian has begun to think of himself as part of a much larger movement and of Asiatic Christians as his brethren in Christ. In the case of Dr. Andrew Thakur Das, who stayed 10 days and led devotional studies from the book of Joshua at the first full meeting of the Presbyterian Mission (previous annual meetings have been delegated), the missionaries and Iranian observers were greatly impressed by the deep spirituality of the man and his testimony to the revival of evangelistic power in West Pakistan. Difficult problems facing the Iranian church and missions seemed smaller as one listened to the story of how the Church of West Pakistan was born out of India's partition and subsequent persecution of minority groups in both of the new countries. —F.T.W.

SOUTH AMERICA

Faith in Liberty

Confident that Colombia's resurgence of constitutional liberty will be a permanent phenomenon, several missions are undertaking construction programs of varying sizes.

The Cumberland Presbyterian Mission is planning to enlarge its well known "American School" in the city of Cali, moving to an out-of-town site adequate to accommodate 2,000 students.

The Normal School of the Presbyterian Mission (USA) in Ibague is adding three buildings. Other church and mission groups are proceeding with construction plans previously delayed because of the uncertain politico-religious situation.

Optimism is now the order of the day.

Network Expands

The five-member stations of the Pan-American Christian Network, meeting at Station HCJB, Quito, Ecuador, tentatively decided to open membership in the net to other evangelical radio operations, such as recording studios, program chains and local Gospel broadcasts.

Over 30 delegates from a dozen countries attended the conference.

Nearly 4,000 half-hour programs were taped and distributed by the net since its last biennial meeting.

During the next 12 months there is a possibility that as many as five new Gospel stations may be on the air in Latin America.

Network officers for the coming two years will be *Robert Remington,* manager; *W. Dayton Roberts,* president, TIFC, Costa Rica; *Albert Platt,* vice president and treasurer, TGNA, Guatemala; *Paul Pretiz,* secretary, HOXO, Panama. Other directors are *Vern Van Hovel,* HCJB, and *Ruben Bonney,* CP-27, Bolivia.

FAR EAST

Report on Red China

The following special report for CHRISTIANITY TODAY *is by Toshio Suekane, General Secretary of the Yokohama, Japan, YMCA, as reported by Kenny Joseph, editor of Japan Harvest, an evangelical quarterly, and director of Evangelism at Japan Christian College, Tokyo.*

When I went to China with the 15-man Japanese delegation last spring, I wanted to know what thoughts were uppermost in the Chinese minds. But the answer to this question was difficult to learn, for those who met us were government agents, though representing the so-called church. They were men who approved the current communist setup.

Most of my time was spent in Shanghai, but I also visited Peking, Hankow, Soochow, Canton, Hanchow and Nanking, speaking with people in each place. Some gave us three hours of orientation and all parroted the same thing: "China was victorious so far as the war was concerned, but corruption in government existed from the highest officials down to streetcar conductors. The people's or general opinion was that only a revolution could overthrow this corruption, but this they naturally dreaded. However, when the communist army first came in, they did not loot or destroy, so they were welcomed."

With the revolution came the awful innovations of which the people told me. The communist party set groups and instigated "study classes for self-criticism" if there was opposition. It was actually "brain washing." It is still in progress. Anti-revolutionists were quickly liquidated. Suicides occurred in such large numbers that it was dangerous to walk near high buildings. *Mao Tse Tung* admitted 800,000 "liquidated," exclusive of suicides. Reports varied, however, for Hongkong heard it was 4,000,000 and Formosa, 12,000,000.

I went to a penitentiary and asked the head man how many lives were sacrificed in the revolution. He made no reply. The terror of those days was so strong that it still showed on those with whom I talked. Once a friend at the hotel where I stayed told me what certain Christians did. Then he said, "God knows—let's not talk about it." After this he bowed his head on my knees and cried, and together we prayed for 30 minutes.

In the country, the landowners' property was confiscated and portioned out to

those doing the farming. During a "Peoples' Court," crimes dating three generations back were retold and the present landowners punished. Some would confess and hand over all they had, but even this wasn't satisfactory and they were still condemned to death. In 1949 and 1950 there were only 3,000,000 communists, and others became fellow travelers. I was told that the intelligensia didn't approve of communism, but they thought it was the only expedient way out for the nation.

You have heard that there are no flies, no dogs, no cats (which would all be a burden to the people to care for, so they were eaten as food because of economic necessity) and no prostitutes. Externally this may be true. The situation is changed from what it was 11 years ago. But people clearly show their heartache. Only teenagers laugh freely. The older folk are very serious and stern, not lighthearted. This is true even among Christians. They are all politicians, concerned with the government—that's all you hear.

Needs are very real; sugar and white flour are impossible to get. Students are often in near rags, just like the Japanese immediately after the war. Even underwear cannot be bought without a ration card. Most people must walk, and though there are buses, one must wait in line a long time.

Cooperative farming was to be set up, but the promised machinery hasn't come. Increase in products was also promised, but no results. Hence there is dissatisfaction. People are told to express their opinion, but they do not dare. Discontent is rampant everywhere. To combat this the Reds instituted a "Rectification" campaign. One man said that merely means another "bloody purge," and that feeling is evident everywhere. Students opposition is handled by having two governing bodies; one communist and the other of college representatives. Control is in the hands of the communist members. A man in Shanghai said, "I threw my pen away —couldn't do any writing anyway."

I have read of the arrests which took place in July after the "rectification" campaign and I am afraid many of my friends may have been arrested.

The Christians in Canton made public this pledge they are bound to:

1. We will guard and defend
   A. Chairman Mao Tse Tung
   B. Communism
   C. The government
   D. The liberation army and
   E. The constitution
2. We will enthusiastically take part in loving our country and study communist policies of the government.
3. We will support the 3-self movement.
4. We will cut all connections with imperialism.
5. We will help one another.
6. We will obey Christ's command to love one another.
7. We will love man and society.
8. On Sunday we will go to church to worship.

This was signed November 4, 1951, and was put in all the churches in China. There is a clause in the constitution guaranteeing religious freedom, but nothing "anti-revolutionary" is tolerated. Not only is there freedom of religion, but also freedom of non-religion or official atheism, therefore no public proclamations (such as street meetings) can be held. It is very hard to know what is "anti-revolutionary" and what is not. *Wang Min Tao,* a famous Peking evangelist, was strong in his evangelical position and refused to enter into the forced union of churches. He was arrested, but the propaganda says it was not because of his Christian faith, rather because of "political" reasons.

The "Sanjiai" (3 self—self-governing, supporting, propagating) movement is an official government-approved patriotic association and has 60 per cent of the Christians enrolled. This group invited us to China. Younger men comprise the group, older men are figureheads only. They took possession of the NCC building. Episcopalians and Baptists are mostly in the leadership. The Student YMCA is not in existence. There is no real advance in the churches; the buildings have been confiscated and not returned. The time may soon come when there will be a great deal of suffering. My own fear is that the churches will collapse. Young people in the churches are few.

I have received many letters criticizing me severely. The "China-Japan Cultural Association" is seemingly neutral, yet there the infiltration of communism cannot be denied. Many groups are being infiltrated in Japan; this brings to mind how the students rioted because they couldn't attend the Moscow convention. Some 150 did go and they returned praising Russia's "peaceful H-Bomb and denouncing Britain's and America's "war" H-bomb, as the Chinese did. In the educational world, Nikkyo (the Japan Teacher's Union) is still influential in sending the communist belief all over Japan.

In China, society is thoroughly communized, but the church could do little about it. Japan today faces the same issues. Here the student communist federation is working to produce leaders for the communist party. We must fight now to retain our freedom. It is a precious thing. My fountain pen was stolen twice in Hongkong, yet I still prefer this harbor city to oppressed Red China, though I could lay it down anywhere in China without being stolen. Freedom is much more precious than a fountain pen!

'Mighty Promise'

The 1957 Worldwide Bible Reading observance, planned for the period from Thanksgiving to Christmas, has been hailed by *President Eisenhower* as holding "a mighty promise" for mankind.

"As the Bible's message is made available in 1,100 tongues, reaching into the most distant corners of the earth," the President said, "we are given strength to continue our work toward that greatest objective of all: peace on earth, good will to men."

During the designated period, people all over the world read a preselected Scriptural passage on the same day. Last year persons in more than 50 countries participated. Climax of the program is Universal Bible Sunday, a tradition in this country since 1904, which falls on December 8.

The Big Secret

What is the secret of the phenomenal rise of the Korean Church?

Some say Bible study. Some say self-support. Others say it is insistence on personal witness by believers. All probably are true, but many believe that the real secret is the intense prayer life of the Korean Church.

An American elder said to a Korean pastor a few months ago, "How many do you get out to your prayer meetings?"

"About 80," replied the pastor.

"Why, you are no farther along than we are," said the visitor. "We get that many out ourselves back in California on Wednesday evenings."

"Oh," said the surprised Korean, "if you are talking of the Wednesday night service, we get 800 out for that. I thought you meant our daily dawn prayer meetings. About 80 of our people come at 5 o'clock every morning to pray."

That is characteristic of the Korean churches everywhere, in the city as well as the country, and where there is such prayer there is power. —S.H.M.

Bible Book of the Month

II THESSALONIANS

THE THESSALONIAN EPISTLES have always occupied a special place in Christian thought as the first inspired letters of the Apostle Paul. They provide a dramatic presentation of the thought and life of the early church and the problems of missionary expansion in the first century.

It appears that Paul first came into contact with the Thessalonians on his second missionary journey (Acts 17:1-10, I and II Thessalonians). Accompanied by Timothy and Silas, Paul had ministered to them for at least three weeks before being forced to leave because of the outbreak of persecution (Acts 17:5-10). While at Athens, Paul had sent Timothy back to the Thessalonian church to encourage and give them further instruction. Upon Timothy's return to Paul at Corinth, news of the stedfastness of the Thessalonian Christians spurred Paul to write to them. Later, when reports of the reception of this first epistle and details of certain continuing problems in the church reached Paul, he was moved to write II Thessalonians. (For further details on historical background see *I Thessalonians* by William Hendriksen, CHRISTIANITY TODAY, May 27, 1957, p. 33.)

GENUINENESS OF II THESSALONIANS

No doubt seems to have been expressed about the genuine Pauline character of the Thessalonian Epistles until the German writer J. E. C. Schmidt questioned II Thessalonians in 1801. Schrader raised a similar question about I Thessalonians in 1836. Further skepticism was voiced by Ferdinand C. Baur in his work *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ* (1845), and the possibility that either or both of these epistles were not genuinely Pauline was thoroughly explored by the Tubingen school of critics. Objections against the authenticity may be summarized as follows: (1) an alleged difference in eschatology; (2) remarkable similarities in the two epistles; (3) certain differences and seeming contradictions between the epistles.

In support of these objections, it is pointed out that though both epistles have an emphasis on eschatology, in I Thessalonians the coming of Christ is presented as an imminent event not preceded by signs, whereas in II Thessalonians 2 the coming of the Lord is revealed as impossible until certain other events have taken place, particularly the appearance of the lawless one. This contrast between signs and imminency is, however, very common in the Word of God. Further, it is not without a logical and theological explanation and therefore has little weight in affecting belief in the authenticity of the epistles. Leon Morris writes: "It is difficult to take this argument seriously, for it demands a logical consistency which is foreign to the very nature of apocalyptic" (*The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians, p. 21*). The same objection could be raised against the teaching of Christ in Matthew 24 and 25. Those who distinguish the coming of Christ for his church from his second advent proper would refer I Thessalonians 4 to the coming of Christ before the tribulation and place the second advent of II Thessalonians 2 as occurring after the tribulation, an explanation which solves the problem if the premises be accepted. In any case the supposed contradiction is too tenuous to establish the doubt of the authenticity of the epistles.

The second objection based on alleged similarities in the two epistles is used by the critics as evidence that II Thessalonians was written by a pseudo author who slavishly copied Paul's expressions. The confessed similarity of style and vocabulary is, of course, a dubious argument against the authenticity of the two epistles. It would be far more likely for the same author to use similar expressions than for another author to be clever enough to simulate so well the style of Paul. The exhaustive word study by James E. Frame, *International Critical Commentary on The Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians,* provides a solid scholarly basis for his conclusion that the vocabulary of both letters is definitely Pauline (cf. pp. 28-34). He shows conclusively that the vocabulary of these two epistles is similar to that of other Pauline letters. As to the genuineness of II Thessalonians itself Frame writes: "It is generally conceded that the vocabulary of I is Pauline; and the same may be said with justice of II. Even when the literary resemblances between I and II are taken into account, it is to be remembered that of the 146 words common to I and II all but four are to be found in one or more of the Major Epistles of Paul" (*ibid.*, p. 31). As Morris points out, after von Dobschutz, "it is strange procedure to reject an Epistle which contains nothing un-Pauline, and bears all the marks of a Pauline utterance, simply because we have another Pauline utterance which is markedly similar" (Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 20). As II Thessalonians 3:17 specifically claims Pauline authorship over his signature, if Paul did not write II Thessalonians, it loses all right to be considered Scripture, as it would be based upon palpable falsehood. The argument against the authenticity of II Thessalonians on the basis of similarity is so subjective and questionable that even critical scholars have for the most part dropped this approach.

More logical, though no more weighty, is the argument from alleged differences of the two epistles. This objection is mostly theological and based on alleged difference in eschatology of the two epistles. Here again it is dubious if there is any such difference which cannot be explained as discussion of two different aspects of the same subject. Taking the arguments from likeness to difference together, it is generally recognized today, even by radical critics, that the evidence is still in favor of genuineness of both epistles. Even the skeptics Holtzmann and Pfleiderer, followers of Baur, have accepted both epistles as genuine.

Though II Thessalonians has been challenged more than I Thessalonians, the facts if anything give better evidence for the authenticity of II Thessalonians than the first epistle. II Thessalonians is included in the Marcionite canon and the Muratorian Fragment. II Thessalonians was known to Polycarp, Ignatius, and Justin and is quoted by Irenaeus by name. There are no other books in the entire New Testament more universally accepted than the Thessalonian Epistles. The normal and widely accepted explanation that I Thessalonians was written shortly after Paul's ministry there and was followed by II Thessalonians to correct certain continuing difficulties, seems to be cogent and unassailable except to subjective critics. The general opinion today is that if one epistle is Pauline, then both are. If Pauline authorship be assumed, however, there are certain other problems which have been raised in the relationship of the two epistles.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE TWO EPISTLES

As Leon Morris points out in his introduction to *The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians* (pp. 25-30), there are three basic problems in the relationship between the two epistles. First, there is the view of Harnack who held that I Thessalonians was addressed to the Gentile section of the Thessalonian *(Cont'd on p. 37)*

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Books in Review

YALE'S HISTORIC ROLE

Yale and the Ministry. A History of Education for the Christian Ministry at Yale from the Founding in 1701, by Roland H. Bainton. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1957, 297 pp., $5.00.

The title, *Yale and the Ministry,* does not do justice to the scope of this book. It is that—but it is much more. Virtually everything connected with Yale's theological education, even before the school was formally organized in 1701, is here included. Attention is paid to libraries, curricula, costs, faculty and students. Nor are the theological emphases neglected. But, in addition to all that, which could properly be expected, it is a veritable history of New England theology and its effect on Yale as well as Yale's on it. For example, Bainton acknowledges that Horace Bushnell, though a minister fifty miles away, influenced Yale students more, probably, than any of the faculty. Nor is the literary influence of Jonathan Edwards ever dropped from sight throughout this work.

Two things have come to be associated with Professor Bainton's writings which are well illustrated in the present work. First, there is his anecdotal, interesting presentation of the subject matter without his becoming shallow or losing touch with great thought. Fluent and facile in his brief summarizations of the systems of various thinkers, he is sometimes inaccurate, but generally is amazingly deft. And, secondly, there are his delightful line drawings, which exceed thirty in *Yale and the Ministry.* Many of these have the slightest hint of caricature which gives an interpretive twist to them. An incidental feature of this volume is that the author is himself the Titus Street Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Yale Divinity School as well as a graduate, and many of his observations are from the inside.

In general, Yale has suffered the vicissitudes of most theological institutions. It has had its ebbs and tides—at present it is at its all-time high, being obliged to limit itself to 400 students—and having one professor for every 13 of them, being well-integrated with the great university and attracting men and women from all branches of the church and nations of the world. Its graduates are shown to hold prominent ecclesiastical and educational posts. Bainton sees as the three constituent elements of the Yale tradition through the centuries: the Reformed emphasis on sin and grace; the Renaissance faith in free criticism; and the Pietistic strain of emotional warmth. He does not point out—perhaps he would not even admit—that since the latter half of the nineteenth century Yale has not been teaching the gospel with which it began; but the evidence for this is in these pages. Perhaps the best single summary of this book and the Yale it presents is this, in which the author contends that the school has been neither reactionary nor radical: "There is perhaps a historic vocation in the role of an institution sufficiently in advance of its constituency to exert a pull and not too far ahead to occasion a snap."

There are several typographical errors such as "exhalt" for "exalt," "impell" for "impel," "arleady" for "already." The second quotation mark is sometimes missing in citations and we noticed at least one period written for a comma. Sir John Davie is wrongly written "Davies" in the Notes, and the fiancee of David Brainerd was not "Jeshura" but "Jerusha." William Ames' latin original of the *Marrow* was written before 1648, and Jonathan Edwards did not spend two years in a pastorate between his graduate studies at Yale and his tutorship there. There is one important error of interpretation: the common notion among non-Calvinists that Calvinists in maintaining divine decrees teach that "man can in no way contribute." Because of this, Professor Bainton is naturally perplexed about Calvinistic evangelism, although, fortunately, he does not deny the fact. Calvinists, believing that God decrees the means no less than the ends, are active evangelists not in spite of, but because of, their theology. Again, it makes interesting reading to draw a parallel between the arch-Calvinist, Edwards, and the arch-anti-Calvinist, Servetus, on the doctrine of the fusion of God and man, but a fairer depicting of Edwardean individualism would dispel the tale.

JOHN H. GERSTNER

AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

Inspiration and Interpretation, by John W. Walvoord, *Ed., et al,* Eerdmans, 1957. $4.50.

The paramount theological problem of our age is that of the full inspiration

and complete authority of the Bible. The Church that relinquishes the historical concept of the truthworthiness of the Bible has nothing of supreme importance to offer hungry souls. It is because of this reason that this book under review is freighted with such tremendous significance. Our finest Protestant theologians have always recognized the central place of the Christian doctrine of inspiration in theological thought. They have been willing to expend their energies in the explication and defense of this doctrine.

This work is a contribution of ten contemporary theologians and produced under the auspices of the Evangelical Theological Society. Originally published for the benefit of the members of the society, it was deemed helpful to offer these papers in book form in the hope of casting new light on the basic problems of revelation and inspiration in relation to contemporary theology.

J. Barton Payne discusses the Biblical interpretation of Irenaeus. Dr. Payne shows that Irenaeus, successor of the apostles, equated the words of the Bible with the words of God and that this identification holds for the New Testament as well as the Old. Documentary evidence is presented to support this affirmation. The author's deduction from the study of Irenaeus is that when Christ and his apostles committed themselves to a view of inspiration equal to that of the most strict rabbis or, as Irenaeus puts it, when Christ accepted the words of Scripture as his own, the question of any lower form of inspiration ceased to be one which could legitimately be entertained. Irenaeus' view of the Scripture was that of a true supernaturalism.

The views of Augustine on inspiration are examined by David W. Kerr in Chapter 2. Here we see that with respect to inspiration of the Bible Augustine declared that the canonical Scriptures are "the revered pen of Thy Spirit." Again Augustine wrote, "the Holy Spirit . . . with admirable wisdom and care for our welfare arranged the Holy Scriptures." Augustine's doctrine is that of verbal inspiration. This conclusion is beyond dispute.

The well-known Lutheran scholar, Dr. J. Theodore Mueller, discusses "Luther and the Bible." For Luther, the fact of verbal inspiration was a source of triumphant rejoicing. Dr. Mueller gives a number of quotations from Luther showing his high doctrine of inspiration of Scripture. He also quotes Reinhold Seeburg who affirmed that "to Luther the words of Scripture are the real words of

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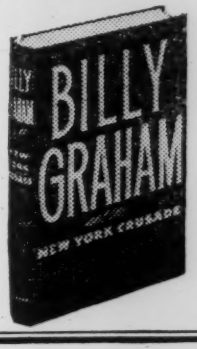

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God for the Holy Spirit has comprehended his wisdom and mystery in the Word and revealed it in Scripture for which reason he (Luther) distinguishes the 'manifest external Word.'" Summarizing his study of Luther's writings, Seeburg wrote, "Scripture, therefore, is the very word of the Holy Spirit." Thus we see in this study that according to Luther the Bible is the inspired divine truth just because in it the Holy Ghost speaks through prophets and apostles. In Luther's own words he affirmed, "No other doctrine should be proclaimed in the Church than the pure Word of God, that is, the Holy Scriptures." Again, with insight into the human heart, Luther wrote, "It is our unbelief and corrupt carnal mind which does not allow us to perceive and consider that God speaks to us in Scripture or that Scripture is the Word of God."

"Calvin and the Holy Scriptures" is the subject of the paper prepared by Dr. Kenneth S. Kantzer. Here Calvin is pictured as supremely the "Doctor of Sacred Scripture." Dr. Kantzer's study of Calvin's 59 volumes also puts the Genevan Reformer in line with other ecumenical theologians in holding to the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. Concerning the extent of inspiration, Calvin goes all the way and insists that it is the part of wisdom to embrace all of the Bible in gentle docility and without any exception because "the Scriptures are the school of the Holy Spirit in which nothing is omitted which it is necessary and useful to know and nothing is taught except what is of advantage to know."

The chapter on John Wesley by George A. Turner shows that Wesley believed in the full inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible. To Wesley, says the writer, the different books of the Bible were all equally inspired and hence, authoritative.

The mediating view of William Sandey is discussed by Dr. R. Laird Harris in Chapter 6. It is pointed out that Sandey did not believe in a verbally inspired text, though Sandey admitted that this view was held among the early fathers.

The views of H. H. Rowley and the "New Trend in Biblical Studies" are evaluated by Dr. Merrill F. Unger in Chapter 7. While expressing gratitude for the recent tendency toward more conservative views, especially toward the Old Testament, the writer feels that this change for the better has not gone far enough to satisfy evangelical Christians.

Dr. Paul King Jewett has a penetrating chapter on Emil Brunner's doctrine of Scripture. This is followed by a chapter appraising of Reinhold Niebuhr's view of Scripture, by Dr. Edward John Carnell.

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, editor of CHRISTIANITY TODAY, closes the symposium with a chapter on "Divine Revelation and the Bible." Dr. Henry insists that the biggest obstacle to faith, as the evangelical view measures the modern scene, is the hardness of men's hearts in relation to the Word of God revealed and written.

This reviewer considers the volume to be one of incomparable value for our day. It is of superlative worth, especially to young theological students who may be confused on this subject. Read carefully and thoughtfully, this volume can serve to clarify and strengthen the thinking of many on the ecumenical doctrine of Holy Scripture. JOHN R. RICHARDSON

CENTRAL POINT LACKING

No Cross, No Crown: A Study of the Atonement, by William J. Wolf, Doubleday, New York, 1957. 216 pp. $3.00.

Professor Wolf's discussion of questions pertinent to the Atonement is well informed on the various currents of thought, both of the past and of the present, as these are concerned with this central tenet of the Christian faith. For that reason, if for no other, Wolf's contribution offers both stimulus and challenge to more disciplined thinking on this all-important subject. For example, how much we need to insist, in Wolf's words, that "unless we can know some definite things about the life and teaching of Jesus, the claim of the Church that he was the Incarnate Son of God and that he brought salvation by his Cross is bound to wither on the vine. For a generation or two it may have the beauty of cut flowers, but severed from its roots it must die" (p. 54). Or, again, we must appreciate Wolf's emphasis upon the organic relation of the life of Christ to his death, and upon the death as the climactic expression of radical obedience (cf., p. 41). Throughout the volume there are therefore insights that are to be deeply appreciated and gratefully endorsed.

Wolf's weaknesses are, however, no less conspicuous. These cannot be dealt with in detail. One sample, since it is distinctly prominent and pervasive, will have to suffice, and it lies at the center of the theme with which this book deals. It is that concerned with vicarious penalty-bearing. The viewpoint of Wolf is expressed in such terms as the following: "It is monstrous to picture the Father deliberately inflicting punishment on his beloved and obedient Son as a scapegoat" (p. 87); "From the biblical point of view it is monstrous to think of God as inflicting punishment on Christ because God was angry with him as a sort or substitution for being angry with sinners. How could God be angry with his only-begotten Son who alone among men is guiltless of wrongdoing?" (p. 111). And referring to the Old Testament ritual of sacrifice as that by which sin was covered he says: "This means that sacrifice was not propitiatory, but expiatory" (p. 122). Although Wolf has worthy observations to make respecting the reality and necessity of holy wrath and of its relations to love (cf., pp.194f.), yet his rejection of the propitiatory aspect of the Atonement reveals the failure which is so characteristic of much modern theology.

It is indeed true that much scholarship has been devoted in recent years to show that propitiation as applied to the Atonement is not a biblical concept. It must also be related that the meticulous work of men like Leon Morris and Roger Nicole has served to expose the fallacy of this contention. In any case the statements of Wolf evince a rather cavalier dismissal of the implications of what is focal in the biblical witness. It is not that we are ready to accept Wolf's way of stating the doctrine he assails. But if we are to take seriously the fact of Christ's vicarious sin-bearing and the witness of Scripture to the effect that "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6), that God made him to be sin (II Cor. 5:21) and that he became a curse (Gal. 3:13), then the notion of penalty inflicted is inescapable. Implicit in sin-bearing is the whole judgment of God upon sin. This is the only explanation of Gethsemane's agony and the abandonment of Calvary. And if we change the perspective just a little, the judgment of God against sin is epitomized in his wrath. If Christ bore sin vicariously he must have borne that which sin inevitably evokes, the holy wrath of God. To the idea of such wrath-bearing the New Testament witness points (*cf.*, Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; I John 2:2; 4:10). It is shallow thinking that finds incompatibility between Christ's vicarious wrath-bearing and the fact that he was himself the sinless, well-beloved, and only-begotten Son of God. It was only because the Father loved the Son supremely and immutably as the only-begotten that the Son could be subject to the wrath of God and bear it vicariously on behalf of his own to the

end of effective and complete propitiation. And nothing more truly certifies to us the security and invincibility of the Father's love and grace (*cf.*, Rom. 8:32; I John 4:10). JOHN MURRAY

BOOK OF THE MONTH

(*Cont'd from page 33*) church and that II Thessalonians was intended for the Jewish section. He believed they were meeting in separate groups and therefore needed separate epistles. As Morris points out, there are insuperable difficulties to this theory in that there is very little support of it and much evidence to the contrary. In view of Paul's opposition to division as indicated in I Corinthians 1:11-17, it would be strange for him to accept such a situation without rebuke. The superscriptions of the two epistles give no basis for distinction in address as they are practically identical, and Harnack had to tamper with the text in order to support his contention.

Some have raised another problem relative to the relation of Silas and Timothy to the written epistles suggesting that possibly one or both of them wrote the epistles with Paul's authority. This view has little to commend itself and raises far more problems than it solves, especially in view of Paul's signature on II Thessalonians.

Another lively subject for discussion has been the suggestion that II Thessalonians actually was the first of the two epistles. Morris discusses the arguments by T. M. Manson and Johannes Weiss and concludes in respect to these arguments that "none of these is really convincing" (*ibid.*, p. 28). Taken as a whole, the critical examination of I and II Thessalonians has led only to the strengthened conviction on the part of scholars generally that both epistles are genuinely Pauline as held by the early church and the great majority of scholars today.

CONTENT OF THE EPISTLES

The main purpose of II Thessalonians, like the first epistle, is to give comfort, instruction and exhortation to the young Christians in Thessalonica. In both epistles the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is a prominent theme of every chapter, but this eschatological emphasis is treated primarily as a practical rather than a theological truth. In the midst of their trial and affliction, the hope of Christ's imminent return was an expectation which gave them courage and strength.

Though a variety of subjects are considered in the second epistle, it may be outlined as follows: 1:1-12, The Christian Hope in Tribulation; 2:1-12, Coming Divine Judgment upon the Lawless One; 2:13-17, Assurance of Salvation; 3:1-18, Exhortations to Prayer, Love of God and Christian Discipline.

The opening chapter of II Thessalonians begins with a salutation almost identical to the opening words of the first epistle. After greeting the Thessalonians in verses 1 and 2, Paul expresses his heartfelt thanks to God for their growing faith, increasing love and patience in their trials. In verses 5-10 he portrays the judgment of God upon the wicked as standing in contrast to the Christian hope of those who are now in tribulation. The chapter concludes with mention of his prayers for them that they might fulfill the will of God and that the Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified in them.

The classic passage of II Thessalonians 2:1-12 has long been a point of departure among expositors of Scripture. According to the opening verses, it appears that the Thessalonians had heard as from Paul that they were already in the Day of the Lord, a time of divine judgment upon the wicked. This teaching Paul denies, asserting that it came neither by a spirit, nor by an oral word from him nor by a letter supposedly written by Paul. In opposition to this erroneous teaching, Paul states that before this time of divine judgment there must come first a departure from God and a revelation of the lawless one, the *anomos*. As Morris asserts (*ibid.*, p. 126), the Greek here points to a specific falling away, literally, *the departure or apostasia*, as if the Thessalonians had already had instruction on this point, possibly a reference to I Thessalonians 5:1-11. The reference, therefore, would be to an apostasy immediately preceding the second advent. Scholars holding to posttribulationism find this passage coinciding with Matthew 24 picturing events immediately preceding the glorious appearing of the Lord. Pretribulationists assign the passage to the same time but believe that the rapture of the church occurs before this period. If the Thessalonians had been taught an imminent return of Christ to be followed chronologically by the judgments on the wicked, it understandably would have brought consternation to them to be taught that they were already in that time of divine wrath.

One of the major problems of II Thessalonians is the statement in verses 6-8 that the lawless one cannot be revealed until a certain restraint be lifted. Relative to the expression "ye know what withholdeth" (v. 6), Morris states succinctly, "We do well to bear in mind that the Thessalonians did know and we do not" (p. 129).

Exegetical problems abound in this difficult portion of II Thessalonians. The most popular identification, common to posttribulationism, is to see a reference to the Roman Empire in this restraining force to lawlessness. Others refer it to the force of law and government in general to maintain order, traced to some extent to the continued influence of Roman law and legal systems of other political states. Still another point of view is to refer the restraint to angelic agencies or to Satan. Others have traced it to divine agency itself, either to God in general, in his providential dealings in the world or specifically to the Holy Spirit. Pretribulationists find an argument here in support of their position by identifying the restrainer as the Holy Spirit taken up with the church, i. e., resuming the forum of ministry to the world which obtained before Pentecost.

The prophecy is specific, however, that when the restraint is lifted the *anomos* will be revealed, working with the power of Satan, deceiving the unrighteous and causing them to believe a lie. By contrast, even though in persecution the

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Thessalonian Christians were far better off with Christian hope than the wicked were without present trial.

A practical section of exhortation immediately follows this eschatological portion. The Thessalonians are assured of their salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth (2:13). Paul exhorts them to stand fast in their Christian convictions as given to them both in Paul's oral ministry and in his written letters (v. 16). Chapter 2 concludes with a prayer for their comfort and for their establishment in the hope that is theirs in Lord Jesus Christ.

The concluding chapter of II Thessalonians combines various exhortations, the first of which is a command for them to pray for Paul that his message of the gospel may be freely preached and that he himself might be delivered from wicked men. He states his own trust in God as one who is faithful not only to Paul but to the Thessalonians and expresses confidence in them that they will obey his exhortations and that the Lord in answer to prayer will direct their hearts into deepening love for God and patient waiting for the coming of the Lord.

After this practical exhortation, he turns to the immediate problem which had not been solved by his first epistle, namely, that some of the Thessalonians had misconstrued the teaching of the Lord's return as justifying idleness and disorderliness. He commands that they should be disciplined, that they should follow his own example of earning their own living by honest toil, not being weary in well doing. He commands sharply that if any refuse to obey this command that the church should break fellowship with them, thereby impressing upon them the extent of their departure from the will of God. In the concluding salutation he prays that the Lord of peace will give them peace always by all means and be with all of them. As a token of the genuineness of this epistle in contrast to an alleged forged epistle (2:2), Paul signs the letter with his own hand adding, "which is the token in every epistle."

LITERATURE

Literature on II Thessalonians is in general the same as on I Thessalonians (cf. article on I Thessalonians by William Hendricksen, *Christianity Today*, May 27, 1957, pp. 33). Of works mentioned by Hendriksen, James E. Frame, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians* (New York, 1912) is on most points an excellent volume in *The International Critical Commentary Series*. Also George Milligan, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians*, (London, 1908) is a classic. Premillenarians rightly consider *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians* by C. F. Hogg and W. E. Vine (second edition, 1929) as the best treatment of both epistles based on the English text but with obvious knowledge of the Greek. Among more recent commentaries may be mentioned *Exposition of First and Second Thessalonians, New Testament Commentary* by William Hendriksen (Grand Rapids, 1955); the contribution of Leon Morris, *The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids, 1957). For sermonic exposition, *The Church in God* by Harold J. Ockenga (Westwood, New Jersey, 1956) may be consulted as well as the writer's own volume *The Thessalonian Epistles* (1956) which provides a popular exegesis. A worthy commentary based on the Greek text is afforded by the work of Alfred Plummer *A Commentary on St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Thessalonians* (London, 1918).

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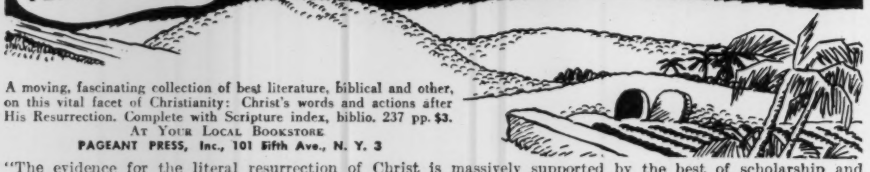

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REVIEW OF

Current Religious Thought

THERE ARE in the New Testament a number of problems which, because of the inadequacy of the evidence available, are surrounded with uncertainty. One such is the question of Paul's "thorn in the flesh" mentioned in II Corinthians 12:7. Over the centuries many solutions have been proposed, at times with excessive confidence; but in the nature of the case it is impossible to escape from the realm of conjecture. The apostle's silence concerning such symptoms as would enable a diagnosis to be made may be taken as being in accord with the mind of God, for subsequent history would seem to indicate that it has been of more benefit to the Church to remain in ignorance on this matter than would have been the case had the nature of the infirmity been fully known. Had a particular affliction—epilepsy, for example—been designated, the great majority of Christians would have been inclined to dismiss the apostle's problem as one remote from the reality of their own experience.

As things are, however, there has been a discernible tendency, as Lightfoot has pointed out, for interpreters in different periods of church history to see "in the apostle's temptation a more or less perfect reflection of the trials which beset their own lives" (*Commentary on Galatians,* pp. 186 ff). This tendency, unconscious though it has been, is perfectly understandable. It has been an *instinctive* tendency, and there is no doubt that it has been a *right* tendency; for it is of the essence of Holy Scripture that it is profitable and applicable in a truly dynamic and existential manner to every circumstance and to every age of the Church. Is there a single servant of Christ who cannot point to some "thorn in the flesh" from which he has prayed to be released, but which has been given him by God to keep him humble, and therefore fruitful, in his service? Every believer must learn that human weakness and divine grace go hand in hand together. Hence Paul's "thorn in the flesh" is, by its very lack of definition, a type of every Christian's "thorn in the flesh," not with regard to externals, but by its spiritual significance.

¶ The earliest patristic reference to this question is found in Tertullian (about 200 A.D.) who mentions that it was said that Paul was afflicted with earache or headache. The tradition that the "thorn in the flesh" was headache is noticed also by Chrysostom, Jerome, and others of the early fathers. Chrysostom, however, finds the suggestion that Paul's body was given over to Satan for the infliction of physical pain quite unacceptable, and, taking the term "Satan" in its general Hebrew sense of "adversary," understands the "messenger of Satan" by which Paul was buffeted to signify all the adversaries who opposed Paul in the work of the gospel. This view that the reference is to the endurance of external persecutions has the support of a number of the ancient authors, including Augustine and Theodoret.

The mistranslation of the Latin Vulgate version (fourth century), "goad of the flesh" — *stimulus carnis* — may have given rise, as Luther supposes, to the opinion that Paul was afflicted with impure temptations of the flesh, an opinion which prevailed in the medieval period and which came to be generally approved in the Roman Catholic church. This view is dismissed as ridiculous by Calvin, in whose judgment the reference is to "every kind of temptation with which Paul was exercised." Luther also rejects the view that temptation to carnal lust is intended, or for that matter, some physical ailment, and explains the "thorn in the flesh" of the various temptations and trials to which the apostle was subject.

¶ Of more recent hypotheses there are several that deserve mention. One is that Paul suffered from a severe form of ophthalmia. Attention is drawn to Galatians 4:15 where Paul, who has just been speaking of "an infirmity of the flesh" (verse 13), says that the Galatians would, if possible, have plucked out their eyes and given them to him; and it is suggested that hints of defective eyesight may also be discerned elsewhere in the New Testament (e.g., Gal. 6:11, Acts 23:5, and Acts 9:9,18).

Another theory which has found wide favor is that Paul suffered from epilepsy, the recurrent attacks of which thoroughly incapacitated and humiliated him. Other great men, such as Caesar, Mahomet, Cromwell and Napoleon, have been cited as epileptics, but it is extremely questionable whether they were in fact such, and in any case modern medical knowledge leads to the conclusion that the symptoms of epilepsy are unlikely to have been those of Paul's "thorn in the flesh."

Perhaps no recent conjecture has been of greater interest than that of Sir William Ramsay who strongly advocated the form of recurrent malarial fever which is known in the Eastern Mediterranean. This fever is accompanied by prostrating paroxysms, severe headache, unsightly eruptions and feelings of self-contempt. The theory is enthusiastically embraced by the contemporary French Roman Catholic scholar E. B. Allo (*Seconde Epitre aux Corinthiens,* pp. 313 ff).

Most recently the French Protestant scholar Ph.H. Menoud has advanced the novel hypothesis that the apostle's "thorn in the flesh" was not a physical complaint at all, but was the "great sorrow and unceasing pain" in his heart because of the unbelief of the Jewish nation (Rom. 9:1-3). The context demands, he feels, a trial peculiar to the Apostle Paul as a counterweight to the exceptional revelations granted him (in *Studia Paulina,* pp. 163 ff).

¶ Many other solutions have been offered, such as hysteria, hypochondria, gallstones, gout, rheumatism, sciatica, gastritis, leprosy, lice in the head, deafness, dental infection, neurasthenia, an impediment of the speech and remorse for the tortures he had himself inflicted on Christians prior to his conversion. No doubt there will be fresh proposals in years to come, for this is a matter which will never be regarded as closed while there are minds to speculate on it.

Was this "stake for the flesh" (which is a more accurate rendering of the Greek than "thorn in the flesh") the same as the infirmity of the flesh which halted him in Galatia and led to his preaching the gospel there for the first time? (Gal. 4:13). Was it one and the same with the affliction which overtook him in Asia, causing him to despair even of life? (II Cor. 1:8). And does he refer to the same thing when he tells the Thessalonians that, having wished to visit them once and again, it was Satan that hindered him on each occasion? (I Thess. 2:18). These are interesting and legitimate questions, but it is impossible to answer them with certainty. What *is* absolutely certain is that God's word to his apostle, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect in weakness" (II Cor. 12:9), holds good for every servant of his in every age and in every circumstance.

PHILIP EDGCUMBE HUGHES